

Handcrafted Fine Art Demonstrations

"The person who works with his hands is a laborer. The person who works with his hands and mind is a mechanic. The person who works with his hands, mind, and heart is an artist". – Peter Engler, one of Silver Dollar City's first craftsmen and celebrated master woodcarver

- **Phoebe Snapp Taffy** – Taffy first appeared on the scene in the late 1800s in Atlantic City as a boardwalk treat for vacation-goers, who would then take the tasty confection home as a souvenir. Today our City's taffymakers have created over 241 flavors of the chewy favorite and our shop sells over 75,000 pounds of taffy per year. **Stop by for a lesson in taste-temptation as taffy is pulled, stretched and formed into bite-sized bursts of flavor.**
- **D. Ellison's Basket Shop** - Early pioneers were taught to make baskets by the Indians who lived in this area. They used pine needles and grass woven round and round to make big work baskets that carry things! The pioneers learned from the Indians to put their white oak and hickory baskets under water for a couple of weeks so they would tighten up and hold water. **Learn how to weave a basket with our demonstrating craftsman.**
- **Granny's Lye Soap** – The basic function of lye soap at any homestead was to clean...either yourself, your clothes or anything else that needed a good wash. Lye soap is comprised of lard, water and lye, which is an alkaline solution cooked together for hours, poured out to harden and then cut into bars. Old-timers swore by the use of lye soap to cure anything that ailed you from poison ivy and bug bites to psoriasis. **Learn from Granny and crew how to make good old-fashioned lye soap.**
- **Mountain Leather Shop** – In the 1880s synthetic fibers such as plastic for windbreakers were not available. Leather was the only way to stay warm. Coats, vests, pants and hats were all made by hand. Animal skins such as cattle, deer and raccoon were most commonly used. Pioneers used oak bark to tan hides before the Indians taught them a faster method. The Indians used the brains of the animal they had killed to tan the hide. The brains had a natural tanning acid that, when cooked along with the animal hide, then scraped in the leather until it was soft, would reduce the total tanning time down to about five days. **Your students can ask the demonstrating craftsman how leather is tanned today!**
- **Duplicating Steam Lathe** – This machine was used to turn pieces of wood into round objects such as rolling pins, noodle cutters and spindles for the back of chairs. Most anything round in the 1880s was made round by being turned on a lathe. **Watch our lathe in action and hear our woodworkers spin tales.**

- **Heartland Home Furnishings** – In a few settlements and most cities in the 1880s, where there was an abundance of hardwoods and access to logging and milling (the practice of changing logs into dimensional lumber), would have had a furniture factory. Manufactured furniture would have been a luxury for families who lived in the Ozarks in the 1880s. They may have only purchased one or two pieces of fine furniture and made the rest themselves.

The saws, routers, joiners, planers and other tools used in Heartland Home Furnishings are the same tools that were used in the 1880s. In fact, they're basically the same tools used today to make furniture. The only difference is in the way they are powered. In the 1880s, tools were run on a "line shaft" system that was powered by a water wheel. Today, these same tools are powered by electricity. **Look to the ceiling to see this "old-style" system and ask our craftsmen about the making of furniture.**

- **Hillside Cut Glass** – Simply defined as any flint glass surface that is etched with designs or patterns using a grinding wheel, cut glass usage dates back to Egyptian times on handblown glass vessels (like those found at Hazel's Blown Glass Factory). It wasn't until 1812 that an American-style of cut glass was born in Boston, Massachusetts by an Englishman. In the years following, the technique would spread across the country, even to the craftsmen in the Ozark region. **Visit with our very own cut glass artists as they demonstrate various patterns and designs.**
- **Carrie's Candles** – Without electricity, candles were one of the primary sources of light in the 1880s (another source of light was kerosene lanterns). Their designs range from simple to ornate. **At Carrie's Candles, watch candles being made or purchase candles to dip yourself, creating your very own color design.**
- **Sullivan's Mill** – In the 1800s, homesteaders would often reap their wheat or corn and travel to the mill to have it ground into flour or meal. Grist is defined as grain that is ready to be ground or that has been ground. Often a portion of the grist was bartered with or traded (to pay for goods and services with other goods instead of with money) to the gristmill owner to pay the cost of grinding. What the gristmill owner couldn't use, he would then sell to people who didn't grow crops or who didn't have their own grain.

Since flour was on hand at the gristmill, it's not a coincidence that is where the bakery is located. Mills like Sullivan's are located near water because they are powered by water wheels. Gravity pulls the water down stream, the weight of the water turns the wheel, the wheel turns the belts, and the belts provide the rotation needed to grind the grain. Without electricity to power motors, early pioneers worked with the land

and all its resources for survival. **See our authentic 1880s gristmill and find out about the grinding process first-hand.**

- **Wilderness Road Blacksmith Shop** – A blacksmith in the 1880s was a wheelwright, a gunsmith, and farrier – a “jack of all trades.” This means the blacksmith would make a variety of things from wagon wheels, guns and horseshoes to tools such as saws, axes, shovels and even nails. These items were hammered from pieces of metal that had been softened in the forge (a furnace for heating metal). **Watch our blacksmith demonstrate and explain the process step by step.**
- **Brown’s Candy Factory** – Candy has been known since ancient times. Egyptian records from approximately 2000 BC show confectionary processes used to make sweetmeats. In 1470, a candy maker in Venice learned to refine sugar imported from the Orient. The use of this sugar for making expensive sweets was the beginning of the modern candy industry. During colonial times, sugar from the maple tree sap provided candy for the people. In 1850, a revolving steam pan was invented. This made it possible to make large amounts of candy at a lower cost. Candy is defined as any food that’s main ingredient is sugar. **On your trip ask the demonstrating candy maker how your students can become Apprentice Candy Makers!**
- **Hazel’s Blown Glass Factory** – Early pioneers in America, and craftsmen many years before them (see the Glassblowing timeline in the showroom) used their talents and resources to create the same glass items that we take for granted every day.

Glass is made of sand (small grains of quartz, often rounded by water or wind), potash (wood ashes) and limestone (a rock commonly found in our area). Sand will melt when heated to 4600 degrees. The potash is added to the sand, and it actually lowers the melting temperature to 2200 degrees. At this temperature, the glass is just like water. Limestone is added to the hot mixture to hold it together and give it a thicker form. The glassblower carefully catches a lump of molten glass at the end of the blowpipe, and blows air into the pipe to expand the glass. These masters of fire and sand are demonstrating all day at Hazel’s Blown Glass Factory. **Before visiting Silver Dollar City, ask your students to study the glass container of pickles or salsa in their refrigerator. There will be a seam from top to bottom where two pieces of glass were connected together indicating the piece is not blown glass, but probably pressed or fused glass.**

- **Valley Road Woodcarvers** – Woodcarving in the 1880s was primarily a pastime. People would carve during the winter months when they couldn’t work outside. They often made beautiful decorative items, perhaps even a carved mantel for their fireplace! Woodcarvers would use trees native to the area for their supply of wood. Today’s carvers prefer to use basswood,

which grows in the upper Midwest, because it is soft and easier to carve on. **Our carvers will demonstrate different styles and techniques and students can purchase the tools and wood to start a piece of their own.**

- **Hillcreek Pottery** – Pottery is one of man's oldest known forms of art dating from 6,000 BC when bowls were formed by simply pushing a fist into a ball of clay. As pottery advanced, artists began to use tools such as the potter's wheel to speed up production, the kiln to fire the clay and harden it, and techniques like glazes to help functionality by making the piece waterproof and to add colorful decoration. **Watch our demonstrating craftsmen to learn about this diverse trade and the steps necessary to take a piece from the potter's wheel to finished functional art.**

Knowledge Standards **Study Guide**

Knowledge Standards

Students will acquire a solid foundation, which includes the knowledge of:

Communication Arts Knowledge Standards

- Comprehending and evaluating the content and artistic aspects of oral and visual presentations (such as storytelling)
- Participating in formal and informal presentations and discussions of issues and ideas
- Identifying and evaluating relationships between language and culture

Fine Arts Knowledge Standards

- Process and techniques for the production and exhibition of one or more of the visual arts
- The principles and elements of different art forms
- Visual arts in historical and cultural contexts

Social Studies Knowledge Standards

- Continuity and change in the history of Missouri, the United States and the world
- Economic concepts (including productivity and the market system) and principles (including the laws of supply and demand)
- The major elements of geographical study and analysis and their relationships to changes in society and environment
- Relationships of the individual and groups to institutions and cultural traditions

Study Guide

Questions: Handcrafted Fine Art Demonstrations

1. How were baskets made watertight?
2. How did early pioneers tan leather versus the Indians' method?
3. Name three things made by a blacksmith.
4. Name five necessities handmade by early Americans.
5. What is the barter system and how was it used at Sullivan's Mill?

Answers:

1. By immersing them in water for 2-3 weeks
2. Pioneers used oak bark to tan hides before the Indians taught them a faster method. The Indians used the brains of the animal they had killed to tan the hide.
3. Wagon wheels, guns, horseshoes, saws, axes, shovels and nails
4. Soap, clothing, candles, meal from grain, glass, wooden utensils and furniture, candy, baskets, taffy, pottery, wagon wheels, horseshoes, fireplace mantels
5. To pay for goods and services with other goods instead of with money, to trade. Often a portion of the grist was bartered with the gristmill owner to pay the cost of grinding. What the gristmill owner couldn't use, he would then sell to people who didn't grow crops or who didn't have their own grain.