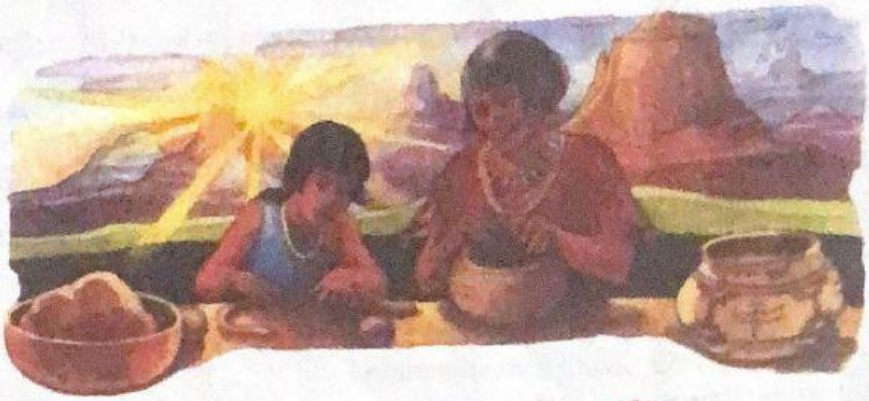
On Your Own

As you read the story, think about the sequence of steps the girl follows to make a clay pot.



Coiling the Pot

"My grandmother showed me how to make clay pots," Grandma said, "and now I give this knowledge to you, Marta. Some day, you will show your daughter so that our traditions will not be lost."

Earlier, Grandma and Marta had walked by the goat field on their way to the stream to dig clay. "I first came here for clay 70 years ago," Grandma recalled.

At home, Grandma cut a slab of clay. "First, we make the base," she explained.

Next, Grandma kneaded a handful of clay into a ball. Then Marta too shaped some clay into a ball.

"Roll the ball into an even rope," Grandma instructed. Marta tried, but her clay rope was thick at the ends, while in the middle it was too thin. "Rolling clay takes practice and patience," said Grandma.

"Now we'll place the first coil on the base," Grandma explained. "The ends should meet, so cut away the extra clay."

Once the first coil was in place, Grandma's fingers smoothed the coil down onto the base. She moistened the coil with slip, a mixture of water and clay, while saying, "The first coil is most important."

Marta rolled a second rope of clay and placed it on top of the first. Again Grandma smoothed it while Marta rolled more coils. Soon, the small pot took shape.

"The pot must stand before we trim it," Grandma explained, "so come help me in the garden." Outside, Grandma hoed her squash plants, while Marta picked beans.

Back in the house, the pot was firm, but not hard. Grandma slowly turned the pot. In one hand, she held a trimming tool that she used to carefully trim away the bumps. Soon, the pot was smooth.

"Next, the pot needs to be fired in the oven," Grandma said. "Once it is finished, we can paint it, glaze it, and finally fire it one last time. It's a good thing you'll be here all summer."

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Checking Comprehension

1. Why is it important to Grandma that Marta learn to make a coil pot?

2. How can you tell that Grandma lives in the country?

Practicing Comprehension Skills

3. Put these six steps for making a coil clay pot in order. Write the numbers 1 to 6 on the lines.

_____ Add more coils, smoothing each coil onto the one below it.

_____ Place the first coil on the base and cut it to fit.

_____ Cut a slab of clay for the base of the pot.

_____ Press the first coil onto the base and smooth it with slip.

_____ Roll a ball of clay into a rope for the first coil.

_____ Let the pot stand and dry for a while.

Fill in the circle next to the correct answer.

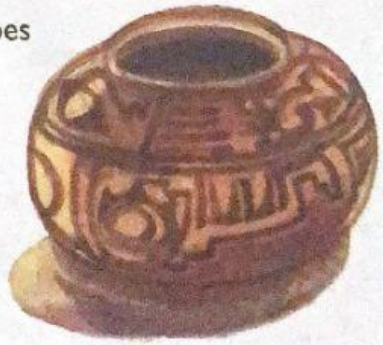
4. After letting the pot stand and dry for a while, what does Grandma do next?

Trim the pot.

Paint the pot.

Coat the pot with slip.

Fire the pot in the oven.



LIVEWORKSHEETS

5. Reread the last paragraph of the story. Write the four steps of making a pot that Marta still has to learn.

First _____

Second _____

Third _____

Fourth _____

Practicing Vocabulary

Write the word from the box that best completes each sentence.

coil	instructed	kneaded	knowledge	patience	traditions	trim

6. Each _____ for the pot was a rope of rolled clay.
7. Rolling the clay slowly and carefully takes _____.
8. Step by step, Grandma _____ Marta on how to make the pot.
9. Making pots is one of the _____ that Grandma passed down to Marta.
10. Grandma started to _____ the bumps off the clay pot.
11. With her hands, Marta _____ the clay into a ball.
12. Grandma's _____ of making clay pots came from her grandmother.

LIVEWORKSHEETS