



Reading a Southwestern Textile

Overview: Learn the methods used to study southwestern textiles and examine a southwestern textile and its original data sheet to determine how specific information was gained.

Objectives:

1. Learn the methods used to analyze a southwestern textile.
2. Studying an image of a textile and a primary source document and determine which analysis method was used to gain particular information.

Materials

The image of the Navajo textile
University of Colorado Museum Textile data sheet (both handwritten and typed)
"The Reading a Southwestern Textile" background information
Blank University of Colorado Museum Textile data sheet

Preparation:

Print/make color copies of the image of the Navajo textile
Make copies of the University of Colorado Museum Textile data sheet (both handwritten and typed)
Review the Three Cultures of Master Weaving: Southwestern Textiles from the CU Museum Collection exhibit vocabulary list, if necessary
Review "The Reading a Southwestern Textile" background information

Procedure:

With participants in small groups, have groups review the image of the Navajo textile and the data sheet.

Discuss the methods used to study southwestern textiles – physical observation, chemical analysis, and archival information.

Have groups determine if the information on the data sheet was ascertained by:

1. Physical Description (including stylistic analysis)
2. Chemical Analysis
3. Archival Information (including collection histories)

Focus on: Type, Culture, Weave, Dimensions, Materials, Color, Dye, Description, Date of Manufacture, History/Remarks.

Share each group's observations and findings and review the methods used to study southwestern textiles.

To extend the experience: Have students bring a blank data sheet to the CU Museum and visit the exhibit *Three Cultures of Master Weaving: Southwestern Textiles from the CU Museum Collection*. Have them choose one of the textiles in the exhibit and record their observations.