Discover The Meaning of Baskets!

A self-guided discovery hunt for the Woven through Time exhibit.

(Best for grade 3rd-5th)
EXHIBIT SECTION: INTRODUCTION

Start at the case full of miniature baskets.

Find the basket that inspired how these miniature baskets are displayed.

*Hint: You may need to stand back to see the design the baskets make. The design is often referred to as a whirlwind.*

Draw the design below:

Next look at the large photo to the left of the miniature case.

Find the woman wearing a crown. She is Miss Papago 1973. Her crown is a woven of the same materials used to make baskets.

What else is she wearing that is made of basketry materials?
Go to the first case on the left with this symbol:

Find the little deer-like figures. How old are they?

These were found in caves in the Grand Canyon area. Caves are cool, dry, and dark. These conditions help preserve items made of fiber.

Look for the small child-sized sandal below it and the sandal imprint next to it.

The design woven into the bottom of a sandal made the imprint. The unique designs could be recognized by friends and family.

Look at the bottom of your shoe. Is there a 3D design on the bottom?  
Yes  No

Could someone recognize its imprint as yours? Why or why not?

Find the white sash. It is made of dog hair. Dog hair is slippery and works best to make yarn when mixed with other fibers.

What material was the dog hair mixed with?
Check out the next case a with this symbol:

Find two baskets that can hold water.

To keep the water from leaking out, the basket fibers were covered with something.

What is it?

Look at the piece of woven textile with a blue design.

What plant was used to dye the threads blue?
Look at the next case with this symbol:

Find the large net. Many people worked together to weave this net.

What do you think it was used for in the desert?

Look at the other end of the case. What are some items people stored in baskets? List them:

Visit the window of baskets:

Look at all the different designs. What different animals and plants can you find?
Look at case on the right with this symbol:

The materials used vary depending on the environment where the basket maker lives.

The Tohono O’odham (Desert People) and the Akimel O’odham (River People) live in desert environment in southern Arizona. What materials do they use to make baskets?

The Apache live in the mountains in central Arizona. What materials do they use to make baskets?
Look at the two center cases, starting with the one on the right with this symbol:

Find the figure carrying a basket on her back.

These are called burden baskets and are used to carry things over long distances.

Can you think of something similar you wear to school?

What is it and what do you carry in it?
Look at the center case on the left with this symbol:

Find the three baskets that look like a person is entering a maze.

These are made by O’odham artists. They tell a story about gaining wisdom as you travel through the maze of life: During your life, you will need to figure out things. Sometimes the path is straight and easy; other times, you might reach an obstacle and have to figure out a different way to do something. At the end of your life, the wisdom you gained will lead you to the center of the maze.

Are there times when you had to figure out how to do something differently to make it work?

☐ Yes
☐ No
Look at the last case with this symbol:

Which basket do you like best? Why?

Look in the book below and find the artist who made that basket.

What is their name? Where are they from?
Now it is your turn to design a basket!

Here are some things to consider:

What will you use your basket for when it is finished?

What shape will your basket be?

What plant or man-made materials you will use to weave your basket?

What designs will you weave into the basket?
Draw your basket here