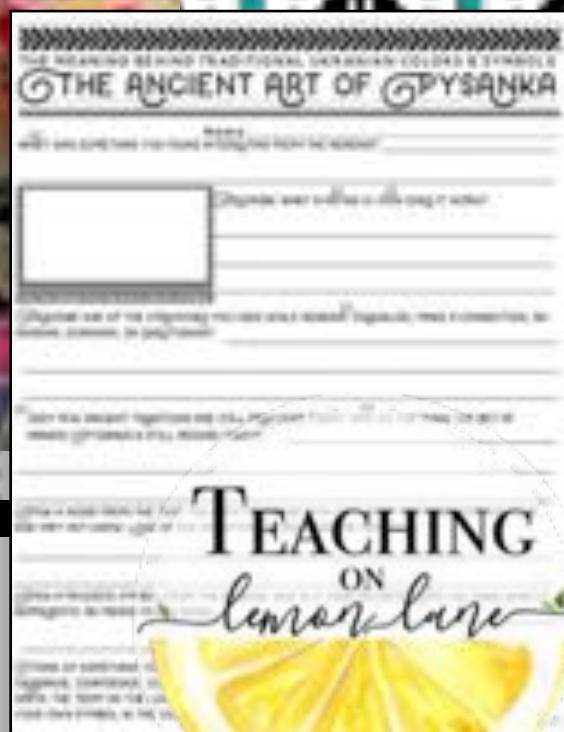


# Ancient Easter Pysanky

LEARN ALL ABOUT THE ANCIENT ART & THEIR DESIGNS



READING COMPREHENSION  
AND QUESTIONS

FREE EXTENSION AVAILABLE



## THE MEANING BEHIND TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN SYMBOLS

# THE ANCIENT ART OF PYSANKA



A basket of decorated pysanky

### Name: \_\_\_\_\_

A Pysanka is a Ukrainian Easter Egg. No one knows the exact date, but the use of a Pysanka can be traced back to ancient times. It was believed that the more Pysanka that were decorated throughout the year, the stronger hold good had over evil. The word pysanky comes from the Ukrainian word "pysanky," which means, to write. Writing is precisely what one does when decorating a pysanka. Instead of using ink and a pen, or lead and a pencil... they use beeswax, and a Kistka. A kistka is basically a stick similar in size to a pencil, with a small funnel attached at the end. A pysanky artist would scoop beeswax into the small funnel then heat the metal funnel over a candle until the wax dripped through the opening. This allows them to write with the wax onto the egg. When the egg is placed into a dye, the wax resists the dye and prevents it from coloring the egg where the wax has been placed. The process of writing intricate designs and symbols on the egg, then soaking with dye is repeated. Once the artist is finished and the final layer of dye has colored the egg, traditionally black, the artist then takes the egg and holds it to a flame. The heat from the flame melts the wax, the wax is then wiped away revealing beautiful colors and designs. The result is completely beautiful and leaves you a little awe-struck when you consider the process. This process is very well thought out from the beginning, even the details down to the colors used and what symbols are written. The symbols and colors used to decorate and dye the pysanka were thought to bring, and mean different things. This means the artist would design the egg based on what they thought was needed. Continue reading to learn about some of the most common symbols found on pysanka and their meaning.



### LADDER | BANDS

Ladders suggest prosperity, or rising above problems. Any band that circles around the egg can suggest eternity, a long life, or the circle of life.



### DOTS | SMALL CIRCLES

Represents the sun and the stars. Meant to symbolize warmth, fortune, life, growth, or memories.



### SUN | WINDMILLS

The sun symbolizes different meanings like good fortune, patience, & is thought to have healing powers.



### WHEAT

Thought to symbolize wishes for good health, and good things to come from your hard work.



he



The Evergreen symbolizes stamina and a long life.



### CURLS

Curls and spirals were thought to bring protection, represented defense or the spiral of time.



### RAM'S HORNS

Thought to represent male & qualities such as strength, vitality, leadership, dignity and perseverance.



### TREE

When the tree is in a pot it is called a Vazon, or the tree of life. It is thought to symbolize long life, good health, usefulness, strength.



### NETS | SIEVE

Nets or a sieve can symbolize different things like gathering in or keeping close, separating good from evil, or even plowed fields that represent the harvest.



THE MEANING BEHIND TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN COLORS & SYMBOLS

# THE ANCIENT ART OF PYSANKA

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

WHAT WAS SOMETHING YOU FOUND INTERESTING FROM THE READING? \_\_\_\_\_



DESCRIBE WHAT A KISTKA IS. HOW DOES IT WORK?

Use the details from the text to sketch a kistka.

DESCRIBE ONE OF THE STRATEGIES YOU USED WHILE READING (VISUALIZE, MAKE A CONNECTION, RE-READING, SCANNING, OR QUESTIONING?)

VERY FEW ANCIENT TRADITIONS ARE STILL PRACTICED TODAY. WHY DO YOU THINK THE ART OF MAKING PYSAANKA IS STILL AROUND TODAY?

PICK A COLOR FROM THE PYSAANKA AND DESCRIBE YOUR OWN MEANING FOR OUR

PICK A FAVORITE SYMBOL FROM THE PYSAANKA AND DESCRIBE YOUR OWN MEANING. YOU THINK WHAT IT

THINK OF SOMETHING YOU COULD USE IN YOUR LIFE, (GUIDANCE, CONFIDENCE, COURAGE, PEACE...ETC.)  
WRITE THE TERM ON THE LINE BELOW & DESIGN  
YOUR OWN SYMBOL IN THE CIRCLE PROVIDED.



# THE MEANING BEHIND TRADITIONAL UKRAINIAN COLORS & SYMBOLS

## THE ANCIENT ART OF PYSANKA

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Pair the meaning with the pysanka symbol to solve the puzzle.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. A wish coming true, the anticipation of spring, and new beginnings.
2. Wishes for good health, and good things to come from your hard work.
3. Prosperity, or rising above problems.

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is the tool used to write with wax.

### WHAT'S THE NAME OF ONE OF THE OLDEST SYMBOLS IN PYSANKY. \_\_\_\_\_

This symbol was believed to be the name of a goddess that protected the home and preserved the family. It was also believed that this goddess was the creator of all living things and the controller of all destinies. Sometimes this symbol can be in a more abstract form and resemble flowers or a tree and is represented by a plant. When this symbol is represented by a plant it is called a vazon, or the Tree of Life.

1. Goodwill, charity, friendship, growth, and love
2. Warmth, fortune, life, growth, or memories.
3. Love and caring.
4. Happiness.
5. Wealth, prosperity, and good health.
6. Protection, and represented defense or the spiral of time.
7. Plural term for Pysanka
8. strength, vitality, leadership, dignity and perseverance.
9. gathering in or keeping close

### WHAT DOES THE UKRAINIAN WORD, "VAZON" LITERALLY TRANSLATE TO? \_\_\_\_\_



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*Before*

# Ancient Easter Pysanky

LEARN ALL ABOUT THE ANCIENT ART & THEIR DESIGNS

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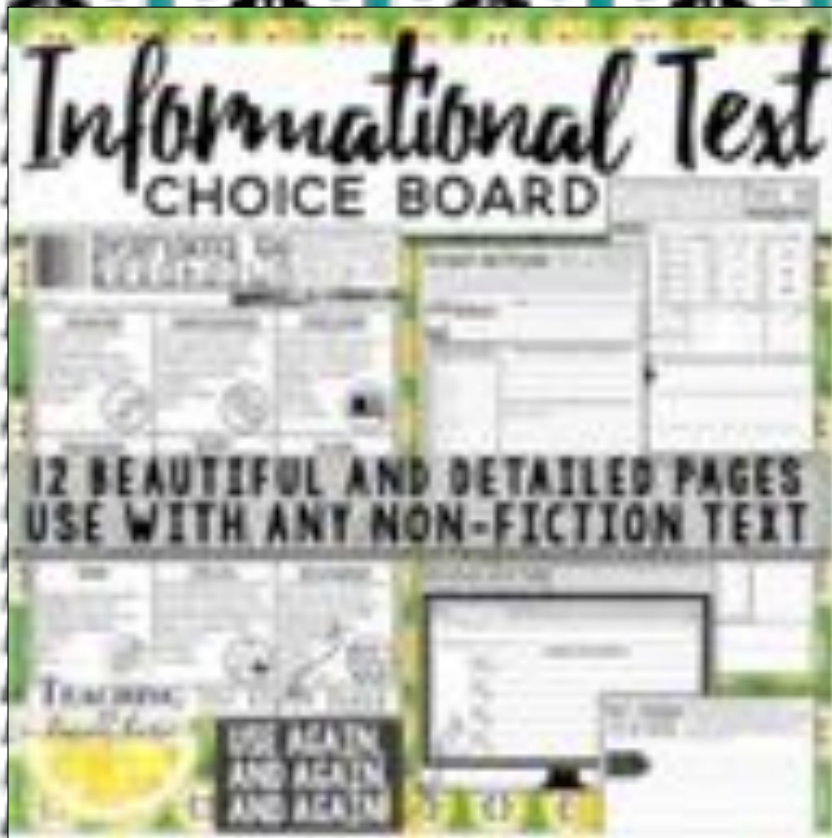
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