

Basic Detail Report



Rattle

Date

ca. 1-800

Primary Maker

Central Highlands/Atlantic Watershed

Medium

pottery

Description

Music and song were remarkably important in the ritual and daily lives of ancient Mesoamericans. Painted vessels show that small musical instruments like rattles and gourds were used in nearly all ceremonies, and their ubiquitous presence suggests that such items were relatively common within the population. Rattles shaped like gourds or squashes may have been ritual items used in ceremonies related to agriculture or fertility. With its simple style and lack of decoration, this particular piece may have been a child’s toy or a commoner’s version of a ritual instrument. Squashes were one of the first domesticates of Mesoamerica and provided a rich source of reliable calories for millennia.

Dimensions

Overall: 3 1/4 x 1 1/4 in. (8.3 x 3.2 cm)