

Lesson Plan - Clay Forms Influenced by Objects from China and Japan  
Third Grade  
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Please note: this lesson takes several weeks. Students come to art once a week for an hour. The clay takes about two to three weeks to dry before the first firing. In between the clay lessons the students were involved in other art activities and lessons.

- I. Clay forms from China and Japan.
- II State Standards of Tennessee for third grade
  - A. Discuss the content of what is seen in a work of art.
  - B. Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.
  - C. Discuss art created by people from selected cultures and selected historical periods.
  - D. Students will choose and evaluate a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.
  - E. Use tools and materials in a safe and responsible manner.

### WEEK ONE

III. Map study - look at pull down political map of the world. Locate United States then find home state then look for city or town. Find China, Japan and Korea on the map. Locate the capital cities of each country.

Have the students look at the distance from these countries and to their home state and home town. Talk about distances between your state, Japan and China. If the students had to ride in an airplane to get to one of these countries how long would it take? How many hours? How many days? What if instead of flying you took a boat how long would it take to travel to China or Japan.

IV. Power Point presentation on Chinese and Japanese animal sculptures; a short look at selected animal sculptures. At the end there is a Thinking Map - Bubble Map. The students sort information about the art using a Bubble Map. This Thinking Map is for describing using adjectives. The students use adjectives to best describe the animal sculptures. If you have never used Thinking Maps, take the time to do one ahead of time and then teach your students how to use them. After the students finish they share with the class their Thinking Map. The maps are hung in the hall for the rest of the school to read. Instead of everyone doing their own map it may be done as a class activity on the board, or overhead projector.

Thinking Map - "The purpose of Thinking Maps is to use them as a common visual language for transferring thinking processes, integrating learning and for continuously assessing progress."  
David Hyerle, Ed.D. Thinking Maps, Inc.

VI. Teacher demonstration - how to make clay animals in the style of Chinese and Japanese animal sculpture. Show students examples that were collected from different places. I use temple dogs, found in the garden section of a local store, in addition to the pictures from the Power Point presentation. Look at the raised details on the animals. Also, look at the thickness of legs, tails and heads and necks. Give the students plenty of opportunities to ask questions about the examples and the making of the animal clay.

The demonstration shows how to make the animals from one piece of clay, pinching out the head legs and tail. Take a piece of clay the size of a small orange and shape it into a ball then into a light bulb shape. Take a craft stick and on one side, on the big end, make a plus (+) sign. This is for the legs, one leg is formed in each quadrant of the + sign. The small end is for the head and neck. Pinch and shape the clay keeping the legs, neck and head round and thick. The thumb is a good example for round and thick. This will help hold the body up. If the body starts to sag put a wad of newspaper under the stomach for support. If you have something to use such as a small tray to hold the clay animal while it is transported from student work space to drying space that would be very helpful.

The designs are put on by two processes. One is using texture tools for the surface not covered by a raised design. The other is the raised designs. These are made by making a coil or rope of clay with the diameter of your student's index finger or a little bigger. With an old tooth brush dipped in slip score the side of the coil of the clay that is going on the outside of the animal. Also, score with slip on the side of the animal where the design is going. Once the slip has been applied put the coil on the animal in a predetermined design and press lightly and shape. If there are angles, sharpen them with your fingers and wooden clay tools. The raised design is just that raised not pressed down. Put texture on the entire body where there is not raised design. Demonstrate how to use the clay tools properly and safely.

When you are finished show the students how to cover the animal with a plastic bag to help dry the clay slowly for a few days. Clean up.

Before the class ends ask the students if they have any additional questions. Also, have a short class review any part of the lesson.

## WEEK TWO

V. Students will make their own animal in the style of the Chinese or Japanese animals. Have a quick review of how to make the animals. Pass out materials and get the students started working. Making a light bulb shape can be a challenge for most students. Encourage the class to work quickly so they will finish and their clay will not dry out. Circulate and help the students with their animals. When they finish write their names on the tummy of their animals and cover with plastic and put on shelf or table to dry.

There will be some children who will not be able to complete their clay animal. They may need more time or they may have difficulty with the project all together. I tell them it is O.K. and have them through their clay in the clay bucket. They can make their animal next week. These students usually agree and do a good job the next week with some one on one.

## WEEK THREE

VI. Clay needs to dry for two to three weeks before it can be fired. After the clay animals are dry they are fired and cooled. Now it is time for the students to glaze their animals. The students should use only

one glaze color. Be careful more than one color may obscure the design. Set up a glaze area and let a small group of students go over and glaze while the other students wait their turn have them write about their animal. What they thought about it, was it successful? Why or why not? If they could how would they change it or what would they do next time? On any questions you want to get the students to think critically about their animal sculpture.

As students finish glazing take their animals, check the bottoms of the feet for glaze. If there is glaze have the student scratch it off with their fingernails while holding the clay piece over the news paper on the glaze table or over a trash can. When they are finished give it back to you. Place all glazed animals on a shelf or table until you load the kiln.

Before you load your kiln take a wet rag and wipe off any glaze on the feet and any other bits that will touch the kiln shelf. This will prevent the animal sticking to the shelf regardless if you use kiln wash.

#### WEEK FOUR

VII. The animals have been fired and cooled. Hand the animal sculptures to the children. Critique will be a Gallery Walk and class critique. For the Gallery Walk the students place their animals in the middle of their tables. Everyone stands up, pushes their chairs in, and with hands in their pockets or behind their backs, the class walks slowly around the room looking at all the animals. When everyone has seen all the animals the class sits down and they talk about each others animals. They may talk about their animal as well. Facilitate the discussion and guide the questions.

When the class is over take up the animals and put them on display for the students, faculty, staff and visitors to enjoy. Make sure they are in a safe place so no one will touch and break them.

#### III. Art vocabulary

- A. Slip - clay thinned with water to act a glue to hold two pieces of clay together.
- B. Scoring - marks put on clay where slip is applied to help hold two pieces of clay together.
- C. Decoration - clay that is applied on top of a clay object or pressed into the clay.
- D. Slab - a flat piece of clay.
- E. Tools - wood tools used to help form a clay objects and apply texture and decoration

#### IX. Resources:

Hyerle, David, Ed.D., Thinking Maps tools for leaning

Lee, Sherman, E., A History of Far Eastern Art

Kerrington, Michael, Asian Art

Keller, Mary Jo, Japan Activity Book

Milliken, Linda, China Activity Book