

Happening Heads

Principle: Form & Shape in 3D

Concept: Clay can be used in different ways to form decorative or functional pieces of art.

Objective: Students use clay to practice sculpture techniques in creating a head and shoulders study, then paint with slip and fire to finish.

Supplies:	✓ 1 ½ pounds of white clay per student ✓ Clay tools and brushes for applying water ✓ Water containers
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Pre-Class Prep:	Day before: Measure out 1.5 pounds of white clay per student, set aside and cover with plastic. This will allow the clay to soften overnight.
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Set-up:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cover tables with canvas sheets.• Place tubs of water on each table.• Distribute clay tools and brushes
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Prints:

Samples: 3D samples corner in art room27

Lesson: **Step 1:** Have students work clay into a rounded rectangle and cut in half. Shape the first half into a “canoe” shape for the shoulders. Turn the piece over and carve the student’s name and room number on the bottom (this is the hollowed out side of canoe shape).

Step 2: Begin shaping the other half of the rounded rectangle into a head. Form a ball and put thumbnail in and drill down until about ½-inch from bottom. Gradually thin the walls, pinching as you go, turning it with the other hand. Stress the importance of even walls, about ½-inch thick. Bring the walls around to a close, which will be the neck area. This piece must be hollow so it won’t explode when being fired in the kiln. Place the head on the shoulders, making sure everyone scores both the head and the shoulders and rubs a small amount of water on each piece to help adhere pieces together.

Step 3: Use thumbs to make indentations for eye sockets, round balls for eyes, and small, flattened coils for eyelids. Create eyebrows for balance. Make a flattened cone for the nose and attach it to the face (using the score and slip method) with small end between the eyes. Use a clay tool to poke nostrils. Mouths are best made by first cutting the mouth open with a knife, nudging slightly on the inside to form the “mouth box” where

lips can be emphasized either by using a tool to “draw” at an angle or attaching small coils to work in and smooth out. Build up chin and cheeks as needed. Show where ears go, between the eyebrows and the mustache line. Hair can be made by pressing clay through a garlic press, by making flattened coils, or making formed hair. Encourage the use of texture in hair and eyebrows. Poke holes through hair and pupils to release trapped air.

***NOTE:** Stress the importance of scoring with a tool and slip with water whenever adding details such as eyeballs, eyebrows, lips, hair, etc. During firing these pieces may fall off if not scored. If pieces fall off, save them. They may be added later when glazing.

After Class:	Place finished heads in boxes (with the teacher’s name on them) and cover with plastic for 2-3 days, remove plastic and let dry for at least one week. Store the boxes in the kiln room. Fire in kiln at Bisque setting.
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Instructions for Instructors

Vocabulary: Ceramics, sculpture, 3D, pinch, coil, slab, texture
Score-Making cross-hatch marks with a tool on each piece of clay to be combined
Slip-Adding a small amount of water to be combine two pieces of clay