

Clay Pots

Principle: Form and Shape in 3D

Concept: Beautiful and functional art can be created using ancient methods of working with clay.

Objective: To create a Native American style pot using the coil method of clay building, while keeping the base no larger than 3", the height no taller than 8", and using the sgraffito method to show the red design.

Supplies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ 1 pound of red clay per child✓ Clay tools, forks, brushes✓ Pre-cut 5" square piece cardboard per student✓ Sheets or canvas for covering tables✓ Small containers for water✓ Spray bottles filled with water✓ White and Black clay slip (Cover Coat)✓ Samples of Native American Designs✓ Plastic to cover projects prior to firing
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Pre-Class Prep:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• At least one day before class, divide clay into one 1-pound ball for each student. Use the biscuit cutter to cut out a base for each student's pot. These should be 3" in diameter and 1/2 -inch thick.
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Set-up:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cover the tables with canvas.• Place 1 pound of red clay at each child's place and one pre-cut clay base on top of the cardboard square.• Distribute bowls of water to each student.• Rolling pins and clay tools should be placed on tables.
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Prints: See Fourth Grade Art Folder and print 166

Samples: see 3-D sample corner

Lesson: **Demonstration:** Start by showing examples of Native American Pottery and discussing how these pots would have been used. Explain that they will be making pots in a traditional Native American shape with red clay and that it will be of a coil design.

Step 2: Demonstrate how to start out with a circle base about 2-3" wide and 1/2" thick. Then show them how to roll coils about the size of their finger. If the sides of the pot are thinner than 1/2" the pot will collapse. Show them how to build upwards. They should score and then brush lightly with water as they attach each part of the coil. Show them how to

put their hands on the inside of the pot as they build to reinforce the walls.

Students: Have them create the coils and build their pots. They may need constant reminders to score and slip each coil. If they neglect this step, the coils won't stick together properly. Mist the pots with the spray bottles every 15 minutes. When the pot is built to their satisfaction, they can add their designs. To add their design, first smooth out coil lines on the outside of the pot with a tool, while supporting the wall of the pot on the inside with their hand. (The design can be placed in a band in the middle or toward the top of the pot.) After it is smooth, they should brush the white slip onto the smooth area. Using a sharp clay tool they should sgraffito (or scratch) through the slip so the red clay design will show through the white slip. You want to see a pattern of red (negative space) through the white design. Then the students can use the black slip as an accent color, either as a stripe around the pot or to add details to their design. Students should put their initials and room number on the bottom of the pot.

After Class:

When this is all done, place pots in a box with the teacher's name on it, cover with plastic, and store in the kiln room closet to dry. This will take at least a week. They should feel dry to the touch before they are fired. They are called greenware before they are fired and are very fragile. After they have been fired they are called bisqueware and they are ready to be glazed.

Instructions for Instructors

Vocabulary:

Sgraffito-A method of scratching away the surface to expose a layer beneath.

Coil Building-A method of building pottery using clay coils that are wound around and around.

Score and slip – A method of roughing up the surface of the clay and adding a little water to the rough area before attaching another clay piece to it to make it stick.

Clay slip – liquid clay

NOTE:

In order to finish the building of pots and sgraffito design in one class, you may need to make special arrangements with the classroom teacher to have a longer session. The projects will probably take 1 ½-2 hours to complete. If you are unable to make these arrangements and the pots are not finished the first week, you will need to take steps to keep the clay pots damp until the next class. If you need to save the pots from one week to the next cover them with plastic bags (these can be found in the South Gym Supply Closet). Before covering, spray the pots with water using a spray bottle. The pots should be checked throughout the week to make sure they are moist.

