

Illuminated Initials

Unit: Ceramics – 3-D - Drawing - symbolism

Lesson: 3-D, Ceramic relief - Drawing

Grade Level: 7th Grade

Duration of Lesson: 1 week

Objectives: Upon completion of this project, the student will be able to:

1. Transform a 2-dimensional piece of artwork into a 3-dimensional sculpture.
2. Experiment with a variety of techniques and procedures while working with clay.
3. Exercise artistic editing as they apply the same basic design to two separate mediums.
4. Critique works of art - evaluate their meanings. Create a work of art with personal symbolism.
5. Exhibit craftsmanship in shading with pencils (show gradation in value - blend colors) - and painting with tempera. Select colors for personal symbolism



7th graders created an Illuminated letter design using their first initial or last name initial. They added to the design with personal symbols of importance to them. They had to plan and design them and then we outlined the drawing in Sharpie Fine Point Markers. I photocopied these drawing so that they would have a copy to use as a tracer on the clay. They had to roll out a slab of clay that was about ½" thick. Then they used a pre-cut tracer (rectangle the size of drawing) to cut out the rectangle. They transferred the clay slab onto wood board and then they laid the photocopy over the clay. They poked holes through the design with a pin tool (sometimes outlining the drawing with a pen will transfer enough, too). Next, they had to roll out a coil that went around the edge of the letter (and scored and slipped that in place). From there, they decided which objects they wanted to build up and which they just wanted to carve. They used the photocopy as a template to make the different objects stand out. After they were fired we painted with Acrylic Gloss Medium may be applied to give a shiny look.



While students were waiting for their projects to dry and get bisque fired, they worked on their Colored Pencils drawings. This fits the curriculum objective to explore an idea in a variety of media.

Materials:

Rough copy of drawing, and 1 photocopy of drawing.
Moist Clay - Rolling Pins - Canvas Rolls - Wire End Clay Tool Set
Fettling Knives, Tray, damp cloth, plastic bags
Variety of Wire End Clay Tool Set
Acrylic Paint (Underglazes and Clear Glaze)
Brushes (variety of sizes)
Acrylic Gloss Varnish

Vocabulary:

Symbolism
Relief sculpture
Negative space
Carving
Bisque Fire
Kiln
Acrylic Paint

Instruction/Motivation:

The motivation of this project is to expose the students to the idea of working across the boundaries of two different mediums. The students will have first completed a drawing of an Illuminated Letter, where the emphasis was placed on design, use of value, and color. The students will then take the drawing and try to recreate it onto a Clay Relief. The emphasis for the clay piece will be placed on form, texture and craftsmanship. The students will make adjustments as they begin to understand the distinct characteristics of the two separate mediums. The clay relief is not meant to become an exact replica of the drawing; rather the drawing should serve as an inspiration for the clay piece.

Procedures:

Upon the start of this project, students have just completed designing and drawing an Illuminated Initial. Students were asked to draw the letter of their name within a 6"x6" piece of paper. The students designed a border and then added "illuminations" or designs within the border. The illuminations could represent hobbies or interests, but should be something that the student closely identifies with. This drawing will be

used as the basis for the clay relief. Rough copies of the drawings were outlined in permanent marker and then photocopied so that the photocopy may be used as a template for the clay.

Students will be given plastic bags and a damp cloth to store the clay in as they work. They will then each be given a board the clay on as well as a rolling pin. The students will need to roll out an 8"x8" slab of clay that is about 1" thick.

Next, students will lay their design on top of the clay and, using a pin tool; will poke holes into the clay (through the paper) along the lines that they have already drawn. These will serve as guidelines for where to place the designs.

The first step after the design is transferred on the slab is to begin carving out the negative space areas of the design. This entire process should take about 3 days. After the students have finished carving out the clay, they will leave the towel off the clay to allow the clay to slowly dry. When the clay is firm, they may carve out certain areas on their plaque. Finally, they will do any necessary smoothing and allow the clay to dry out slowly so that it will be ready for firing.

After the firing, students will paint their plaque with Acrylic paint. The painting portion of the project should take about 2 days. Emphasis will be placed on mixing and experimenting with colors. Finally, a clear acrylic gloss varnish will be applied to protect the paint.

