

Ceramic Teapots

Rationale for the Unit / Statement of Philosophy: By nature, ceramics are function objects, such as mugs, bowls, and plates. Teapots fall into the category of "functional ceramics." But, they can also be very whimsical and almost sculptural in the way they are made. This assignment for high school art students, to create a teapot that is unique yet functional, will stretch students to see how the functional and non-functional can meet in one project. This project can span all levels of student interest because of the wide breadth of student freedom in theme. Also, creating teapots is a project for gifted art students because they are not limited to how detailed or expressive they would like to be with their teapots.

QuickTime™ and a
TIFF (Uncompressed) decompressor
are needed to see this picture.

Time: 5 days + 1 glazing day

Grade/Class: 9-12th Art Class—such as Advanced Art or Ceramics

Objectives/Standards:

Students will:

1. Design at least three different sketches, with color, of ideas for their teapot design. (SD #1)
2. Discuss the history of teapots and their significance in culture. (SD #3)
3. Assemble a unique teapot using their knowledge of clay handbuilding. (SD #2)
4. Evaluate and critique their finished teapots as a class and individually. (SD #4)
5. Analyze how art can be functional and/or non-functional and the value of each. (SD #4)

SD K-12 Art Content Standards:

9-12.1.2. Students will communicate personal ideas, experiences, or emotions through their work.

9-12.2.2. Students will analyze a variety of techniques to give their work quality and detail.

9-12.2.3. Students will apply compositional elements and principles to solve specific visual arts problems.

9-12.3.2. Students will analyze the role of visual arts in reflecting and influencing culture and society.

9-12.4.1. Students will evaluate works of art in terms of concepts, ideas, or intentions.

9-12.4.2. Students will justify visual art preferences using personal aesthetic criteria.

9-12.4.4. Students will evaluate the quality and effectiveness of personal artwork using specific criteria.

Materials: (*=1 per student)

Teapot example(s) or pictures

*Sketch paper

*Pencils

*board or clay bat to work on

Clay

Rolling pins

Wooden slats

Scoring tools: toothbrush, wire tools, etc.

Clay slurry for scoring

*Plastic bags

Ceramic tools for details

Glazes

*Brushes

Procedure:

Day 1: Introduce the teapot unit.

Start class by allowing students to make their own tea. Have a few hotpots or coffee makers with hot water and a few tea choices, sugar, and milk. Discuss the history of teapots and the social atmosphere that tea creates in different cultures. Show examples and/or photos of unique teapots. Discuss as a class how art can

be functional and non-functional. How can these teapots span that gap? Give assignment: Create a teapot that is unique yet functional using handbuilding techniques. Before starting the actual building process, students must design at least three different sketches, with color, of ideas for their teapot design then justify their ideas with the teacher before beginning.

Day 2-5: Working days. (half of class on Day 3 or 4 should be spent in class critique)

After their teapot sketch is done and teacher OKed, students may begin their pots. The teacher will give a refresher demonstration of how to make slabs using wood slats and a rolling pin. Creating the teapot base with draped slabs pressed inside a bowl works well. Make sure students are using proper slipping and scoring techniques to ensure that the pot stays together. Crumpled newspaper can also be used to hold up the inside of the pot. Add the strainer by creating holes, then add the spout, foot, handle, and lid. The students will have to use problem-solving skills to figure out how to create their design while still making a stable, functional pot. A class critique on day 3 or 4 will be beneficial for students to explain and get more ideas for their pieces from their classmates.

Day 6: Glazing

Whenever pots are finished: Final Class Critique.

Differentiation components for Gifted Students:

If there is time, students may also create additional pieces to go with their teapot. Such as a creamer, sugar bowl, or teacups. Gifted students may also be challenged to create a teapot that parallels a traditional Japanese story/legend or a story from their own heritage. The teacher should also be actively involved in the creation process through giving advice, assisting with problem solving, and asking students to explain their aesthetic decisions. Gifted students should also be able to field higher order thinking questions from the teacher. These talented students may need to be assessed on the value of their work compared to their previous work to see if they are challenging themselves as they progress in the class, rather than plateau because their work is already "good."

Vocabulary:

Clay scoring: act of making clay pieces ready to join together by scraping and applying slurry to each surface.

Leatherhard: stage after clay has dried from plastic state, but is still workable to cut or alter. Darker appearance than dry clay, and is cool and damp to touch.

Clay slurry: mixture of dry clay and water which acts as a glue for scoring and joining clay.

Evaluation:

1. Did the students complete three sketches of teapot ideas with color?
2. Did the student present their teapot to the class with justification for their theme?
3. Did the student assemble a well-made teapot using their knowledge of slab rolling and quality clay scoring?
4. Was the student able to make at least three constructive comments in the class critique?

Art Project Rubric

Name:

Project: **Ceramic Teapot**

Date:

X the boxes in pencil that best show how well you feel that you completed that criterion for the assignment.

	Excellent 5	4	Average 3	2	Needs work 1	Rate Yourself	Teacher's Rating
Designs - creativity - problem solving. Is work unique?							
Construction and functionality – Does the teapot work?							
Aesthetics in – careful glaze application?							
Effort: took time to develop idea & complete project? Sketches? (Didn't rush.) Good use of class time?							
Craftsmanship – Neat, clean & complete? Skillful use of the art tools & media?							
How are the principles of design and composition used to make the visual elements work well?							
Participation in the class critique?							
					Total Grade:		

Teacher comments:

Sources:

Jacobs, Judie Whimsical Ceramic Teapots. Retrieved June 22, 2009, from Princeton Online Web site:
<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/lessons/high/Judie-TeaPots.htm#Christa>

Explanation of the Differentiated Components from Lesson:

Gifted art students in a regular art classroom may be given less attention by the teacher because they are doing what they are suppose to and doing well. Rather, the teacher should be giving them equal attention and challenging them to go above and beyond the assignment. In art, there is not necessarily one "right answer" as in a true/false or multiple-choice test. This provides a lot of space for gifted art students to go beyond requirements and try not only for and "A" but for the achievement of their art ideas. This teapot assignment has much room for creativity and problem-solving opportunities.

"Create additional pieces": Gifted students in art may work faster on projects than their peers. Therefore, they may want to continue with their teapot theme by making teapot "accessories" such as a creamer, sugar bowl, and/or teacups.

"Theme parallels a traditional Japanese story/ledged or a story from their own heritage": Since a teapot is a very traditional piece in ceramics, it may be interesting for a gifted student to take their teapot theme up a notch by depicting a story from their or another culture.

"The teacher should also be actively involved": As a teacher, I want to be talking with the students while they are in the creation process to help them discover their potential in the project. Gifted students may already be doing their own problem solving and have great skill in their work, so I want to be asking them questions about the decisions they are making and having them talk through the aesthetic process.

"Are the advanced students challenging themselves as they progress in the class, rather than plateau because their work is already "good"?": If a student is skilled in art, they may want to relax and just do a good enough job to "get the A" rather than really working towards their full potential. As a teacher, it is important for me not to just let these students slide into such a habit. I want to be challenging them with questions about their work and asking them to try things that are new. I also want to be asking them if they feel they are progressing in the class and making each subsequent project better then the last.