

# LESSON PLAN

## FROM PAPER TO CLAY; BRINGING DRAWINGS TO FORM

Suggested Levels: Collaboration of Primary Students drawings and High School Students sculpting  
Designer: Bailie Benson



*In this lesson, students will craft ceramic sculptures of animals or people inspired by second-grade drawings. The goal is to interpret these childlike, simplified images into ceramic forms, emphasizing creativity, basic hand-building techniques, and texture. Students will explore how to transform two-dimensional drawings into three-dimensional sculptures, experimenting with clay techniques such as coiling, slab-building, and adding details to the form.*

*Through this project, students will engage in critical thinking, practice their sculpting skills, while learning to approach their art with a playful and imaginative mindset. The lesson will culminate in a group critique and reflection session, where students will discuss their process and the challenges, they faced in translating the drawings into clay. For an extra creative twist, there's also an option to convert their sculptures into playful bobble heads.*

### OBJECTIVES

**I CAN...** translate a 2D drawing into a 3D ceramic sculpture using hand-building techniques like coiling and slab building.

**I CAN...** add texture and details to my sculpture to enhance its form and bring the figure to life.

**I CAN...** reflect on my creative process and discuss how I interpreted the original drawing in my sculpture.

### NATIONAL VISUAL ART STANDARDS

#### Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

- Students will interpret 2nd-grade animal drawings into 3D ceramic sculptures, exploring personal and artistic ideas in translating simplified forms into clay.

#### Refine and complete artistic work.

- Students will use hand-building techniques, texture, and detail to refine their sculptures, adjusting proportions and adding complexity to their interpretations of the drawings.

#### Perceive and analyze artistic work.

- Students will reflect on how their 3D interpretations compare to the original 2D drawings and engage in critique to evaluate how their sculptures communicate the essence of the original artwork.

## MEET THE MASTERS

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*Several well-known artists have worked in styles or mediums that involve translating simplified, abstract, or playful forms into three-dimensional sculptures, similar to the process your students will undertake. Here are a few famous artists whose work could inspire this lesson:*



### **Pablo Picasso**

*Style: Cubism, abstraction, childlike simplicity.*

Picasso famously embraced childlike forms and spontaneous expression, especially in his later works. His sculptures and drawings often have simplified, exaggerated features, making him an excellent reference for the transformation of simple shapes into expressive forms.



### **Jeff Koons**

*Style: Pop art, playful, often childlike and cartoonish.*

Koons is known for taking simple, everyday objects and making them larger-than-life sculptures, often with a shiny, playful aesthetic. His work has a childlike quality that reflects innocence and wonder, similar to the way 2nd graders draw.



### **Alexander Calder**

*Style: Abstract, kinetic sculpture, playful and imaginative.*

Calder's sculptures often incorporate simple, flowing forms and colorful elements. His use of basic shapes and dynamic movement can inspire students to embrace simplicity and playfulness in their work.



### **Keith Haring**

*Style: Pop art, graffiti, bold lines, cartoon-like figures.*

Haring's work is often playful and colorful, with figures that resemble simplified drawings. His emphasis on bold shapes and lines mirrors the simplicity and expressiveness of children's art, making his work a great reference for thinking about how to turn a drawing into a sculpture.

# SUPPLY LIST

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## CLAY

- Clay body of choice

## BRUSHES AND TOOLS

- Student drawing
- Carving tool
- Loop tool
- Toothpick
- Bowl of water
- Sponge
- Wire cutter



## COLORS BY MAYCO

This project features Mayco's [Stroke & Coat®](#) glazes. Stroke & Coat® is a highly versatile glaze with a wide firing range and can be used in every decorative way imaginable! This line of glaze is especially great for capturing the colorful, playful details of elementary-style drawings.

Here's why they're particularly well-suited:

1. **Vibrant Colors:** Stroke & Coat glazes are known for their rich, vibrant colors, which hold well on various clay bodies. This is ideal for bringing out the bold, playful colors typical of elementary-style drawings.
2. **Opaque Coverage:** These glazes offer great opacity, allowing students to apply fewer coats to achieve solid colors. This is especially helpful for beginners who might not have a lot of experience layering glazes to get an even finish.
3. **Consistency Across Firings:** Stroke & Coat glazes maintain color consistency at both low and high firing temperatures. This reliability helps students see their designs come to life accurately.
4. **User-Friendly Application:** Stroke & Coat glazes are forgiving, self-leveling, and less prone to streaking, making it easier for students to get smooth, even coats. This ease of use is beneficial for high school students who are still developing their glazing techniques.
5. **Non-Toxic and Food Safe:** Mayco's Stroke & Coat glazes are non-toxic, which is safer for students to handle, and they are food safe when fired to proper maturity. This ensures that the finished ceramic pieces are safe to use if students make functional items.



# ACTIVITY

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## 1. Introduction to the Project

- Discuss the project's goal: taking a simple, imaginative drawing and translating it into a 3D sculpture. Talk about how artists often use simple shapes or whimsical elements to bring their work to life.
- Discuss if the bobble head option will work with your subject.

## 2. Choosing or Creating Drawings

- Cooperating with an elementary teacher to have a class do drawings and using simple shapes and lines to create characters, animals, or objects. (Lesson plan uses a 2nd grade class)
- Each student picks one drawing.

## 3. Concept Sketching

- Ask students to sketch a 3D interpretation of their drawing, thinking about how to give it depth, volume, and texture.
- Encourage them to experiment with how to build up different shapes to capture the drawing's essence in 3D.

## 4. Demonstration of Basic Techniques

- Show students how to use basic hand-building techniques such as pinching, coiling, and slab-building to construct their forms.
- Emphasize creating a stable base or structure, especially if they're working with more complex or vertical designs.

## 5. Creating the Basic Form

- Have students start by building a rough shape based on their concept sketches.

- Encourage them to focus on proportions and overall form rather than fine details at this stage.
- Remind them to score and slip pieces together to ensure they're securely attached.

## 6. Adding Details

- Show how to add details by carving, adding small pieces of clay, and using tools to create textures that capture the personality of the original drawing.
- Students can now work on fine details like facial features, textures (e.g., feathers, scales), and any other defining characteristics of their piece.

## 7. Drying and Pre-Firing

- Allow sculptures to dry completely before firing (discuss this as part of the lesson if you're in a setting where students can see the drying stages).

## 8. Glazing

- After the bisque firing, students apply Mayco's Stroke & Coat® glazes to their sculpture matching the drawing as closely as possible.

## 9. Reflection & Sharing

- Once the pieces are finished, hold a reflection session where students can discuss their challenges, what they enjoyed, and what they learned from transforming a 2D drawing into a 3D sculpture.
- Display finished sculptures alongside the original drawings to showcase the transformation.

## ACTIVITY

### Bobblehead Option - Extra Lesson Plan Component

**Objective:** Students will have the option to incorporate a bobblehead mechanism into their sculptures by designing the head to sit on a cone-shaped addition at the top of the body, allowing movement. This adds an interactive element to the sculpture and challenges students to consider balance, weight distribution, and structural integrity.

#### 1. Design & Planning

- Students will analyze their primary student's drawing and decide if a bobblehead feature would enhance the character's personality.
- Sketch how the head and body will connect, considering proportions and stability.

#### 2. Creating the Bobblehead Mechanism

- The body should include a cone-shaped addition at the top, which will act as the pivot point for the head.
- The head should have a corresponding hollowed-out section large enough to fit loosely over the cone, allowing movement.

#### 3. Testing & Adjustments

- Before the clay dries completely, students can test the fit to ensure the head can move freely without falling off.
- Encourage experimentation with different cone angles and sizes to see how it affects the bobble motion.

#### 4. Drying & Firing

- Ensure both pieces are completely dry before bisque firing.
- After firing, check that the head still moves properly before applying glaze.

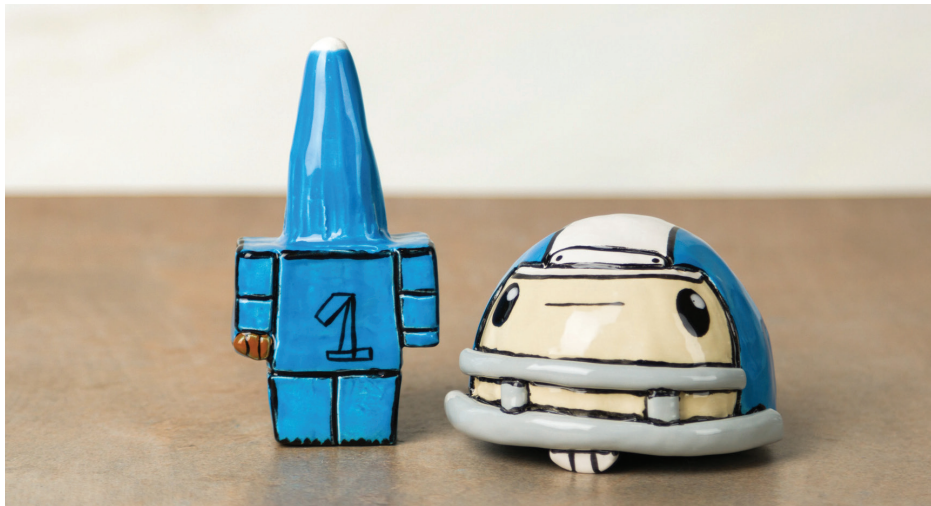
#### 5. Finishing Touches

- Glaze each piece separately, ensuring no glaze is applied where the head and body connect.
- Fire the pieces again, then assemble them for the final bobble effect.

#### 6. Reflection & Discussion

- How did adding movement change the character of the sculpture?
- What challenges did students face in balancing the bobble motion?
- How did different cone sizes and angles affect the final result?

*This option allows students to explore form, function, and playfulness in sculpture, adding an engaging and dynamic element to their work.*



## DIRECTIONS

1. Begin with a solid lump of low fire clay and roughly shape into the general outline of the student drawing. Gradually begin refining the shape with your fingertips and then a loop tool for the finer details. Use a damp sponge and detail paintbrush to smooth out the surface from the lines left behind by the loop tool. Score and slip details like the eyes, ears, and nose.



2. Using a wire cutter, carefully remove the head of the bear from the body. Carve out the excess clay from the inside of the head and body using the loop tool, leaving the walls of the sculpture no thicker than a fingers width. Using a toothpick, score and slip the head back onto the body.



3. Shape the scarf from flattened coils of clay and score and slip around the neck to help hide the seam from hollowing out the sculpture. Be sure that there is a hole at the base of the sculpture for moisture to escape from the hollowed-out area inside.
4. Allow the sculpture to fully dry and bisque fire to cone 04.
5. Use various colors of Stroke & Coat to add color to the bear. Stroke & Coat will give a more translucent look with one and two coat applications, which can work to your advantage with a fur look. Try loading your brush with more than one color and create strokes with varying colors to make the look of texture.





## EXTEND THE LEARNING *using Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory*

### LINGUISTIC (Word Smart)

High school students write a detailed biography of the person or animal based on the elementary student's drawing. This can include its name, species if it applies, habitat, personality traits, and a fictional backstory.

Pair high school and elementary students to co-create a short story about the person or animal. The elementary student provides ideas for the plot and setting, while the high school student helps organize and expand the story using literary techniques.

### SPATIAL (Picture Smart)

Have students experiment with scaling their sculpture up or down. They can take the original drawing and enlarge or shrink their animal sculpture while maintaining proportion and detail.

Encourage students to analyze the sculpted animal for basic geometric shapes (cylinders, spheres, cones) that might be present in the form. Students can break down the animal's body into these shapes and then refine them to add more detail and realism.

### INTERPERSONAL (People Smart)

Pair each high school student with the elementary student whose drawing they sculpted. Together, they create a short story about the person or animal, including its personality, habitat, and adventures.

Elementary students write a short "biography" for their person or animal, including its name, traits, and fun facts. High school students incorporate these details into a display that includes the sculpture and biography.

### BODY KINESTHETIC (Body Smart)

Pair students together, with one student acting as the "model" for the other. The model strikes a pose that reflects the animal they drew (e.g., a crouched pose for a cat, or a leaping pose for a frog). The other student must interpret that pose by sculpting while mimicking the same posture or using their body to guide the shape of the sculpture.

Before beginning their sculptures, students engage in a short warm-up by doing quick, fluid gesture drawings of the animal using their bodies. For example, students can move their arms or whole bodies to mimic the posture or movement of the animal and then translate that movement into a sketch.

### NATURALIST (Nature Smart)

High school students design a diorama representing the environment or setting of their sculpted figure, incorporating relevant features such as climate, vegetation, architecture, or other elements that reflect their subject's surroundings.

Take students on a nature walk to observe local wildlife and discuss how animals interact with their environment. For students sculpting a person, encourage them to observe how people interact with nature, architecture, or daily surroundings. Have them journal their observations and use them to enhance their sculptures or incorporate design elements inspired by real-world settings.

### LOGICAL/ MATHEMATICAL (Number Smart)

Create a coordinate grid and have students position their animal sculpture within that grid. They can decide on specific coordinates where different parts of the sculpture (e.g., head, limbs, tail) should be placed, making sure they are positioned logically based on size and balance.

Have students study the proportions of the animal in the elementary student's drawing and compare it to real-life proportions of that animal. Students can use basic mathematical ratios to scale the animal correctly, ensuring that the limbs, head, body, and features align symmetrically.

### INTRAPERSONAL (Self Smart)

After completing the sculpture, high school students write a journal entry reflecting on the emotional connection they felt while creating the sculpture. They can explore questions like: What did you learn about yourself through the process? How did you interpret the elementary student's drawing?

High school students write an artist statement for their sculpture, explaining how they connected with the animal and the elementary student's drawing. They should also reflect on the process, challenges, and what the project taught them about their own creativity.

### MUSIC (Music Smart)

Students compose a short musical piece inspired by their animal's behavior, such as a chase scene for a predator or a calming melody for a gentle herbivore. They should think about how the animal's movements or sounds could translate into musical patterns, such as repetitive motifs, sudden changes in tempo, or shifts in dynamics.

Students create a soundtrack that represents their sculpted animal. They can compose music using instruments, sounds, or digital tools that reflect the animal's characteristics—perhaps using low, rumbling sounds for a large animal like an elephant or high-pitched tones for a bird.

# RUBRIC

|                           | 4 - EXCELLENT   | 3 - GOOD   | 2 - SATISFACTORY   | 1 - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT   |
|---------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| CREATIVITY & CONCEPT      | Exceptional creativity, effectively translates 2D to 3D, with unique ideas. | Good creativity, clear connection to 2D, with some adjustments.    | Moderate creativity; lacks unique or imaginative elements.       | Minimal connection to 2D drawing; limited creativity.           |
| TECHNICAL SKILL           | Exceptional craftsmanship; stable, smooth, and well-constructed.            | Good craftsmanship; solid structure with minor imperfections.      | Adequate craftsmanship; uneven or fragile with noticeable flaws. | Weak craftsmanship; poorly constructed with significant issues. |
| GLAZING/SURFACE TREATMENT | Exceptional glazing; vibrant, thoughtfully applied, enhances design.        | Good glazing; vibrant but with minor imperfections.                | Adequate glazing; uneven application or basic color choices.     | Poor glazing; uneven or detracts from the overall appearance.   |
| EFFORT & TIME MANAGEMENT  | Strong, consistent effort; excellent use of class time.                     | Good effort; mostly used time effectively with minor distractions. | Adequate effort; inconsistent use of time and focus.             | Minimal effort; poor use of class time, disengaged at times.    |

*This rubric provides a clear and balanced way to assess both the technical and creative aspects of the project, while also encouraging student reflection and effort throughout the process.*

**Total Score: \_\_\_\_/20**

| PERFORMANCE LEVELS   |
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| <p><b>18-20 POINTS (A):</b> OUTSTANDING WORK, WITH HIGH LEVELS OF CREATIVITY, CRAFTSMANSHIP, AND ADHERENCE TO THE ORIGINAL DRAWING REFLECTING CONSISTENT EFFORT AND ENGAGEMENT.</p> <p><b>15-17 POINTS (B):</b> GOOD WORK, DEMONSTRATING CREATIVITY AND SOLID CRAFTSMANSHIP. SOME MINOR FLAWS, BUT THE PROJECT MEETS EXPECTATIONS.</p> <p><b>12-14 POINTS (C):</b> FAIR WORK, WITH SOME CREATIVE EFFORT AND BASIC CRAFTSMANSHIP. SEVERAL AREAS NEED IMPROVEMENT.</p> <p><b>9-11 POINTS (D):</b> PROJECT LACKS CREATIVITY OR CRAFTSMANSHIP, WITH NOTICEABLE ISSUES IN CONSTRUCTION OR ENGAGEMENT.</p> <p><b>BELOW 9 POINTS (F):</b> INCOMPLETE OR RUSHED PROJECT WITH MINIMAL EFFORT OR ENGAGEMENT. FAILS TO MEET THE BASIC CRITERIA.</p> |