

LESSON PLAN

PICASSO MEETS MAYCO: GLAZED CERAMIC WALL HANGING

Suggested Levels: Junior High School to Advanced

Designer: Bailie Benson



In this lesson, students will create a Cubist-inspired ceramic wall hanging sculpture that captures the essence of Picasso's abstraction while showcasing the student's individual creativity.

Students will use slab construction and geometric abstraction to bring their sculptures to life. Designs will feature carved patterns and overlapping forms. A combination of glazes—including glossy, matte and transparent glazes—will be applied to add texture, color, and depth. This project encourages creative exploration of form, texture, pattern and color in ceramic design.

OBJECTIVES

I CAN... design and create a ceramic piece inspired by Picasso's Cubist style, using geometric abstraction and layered forms.

I CAN... use slab-building techniques and carving to construct a wall hanging with decorative elements.

I CAN... apply a combination of glaze types, to create unique textures, colors, and finishes on my ceramic artwork.

NATIONAL VISUAL ART STANDARDS

Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

- Students will conceptualize and create a ceramic wall hanging inspired by Cubism, using geometric abstraction and experimenting with different forms and structures.

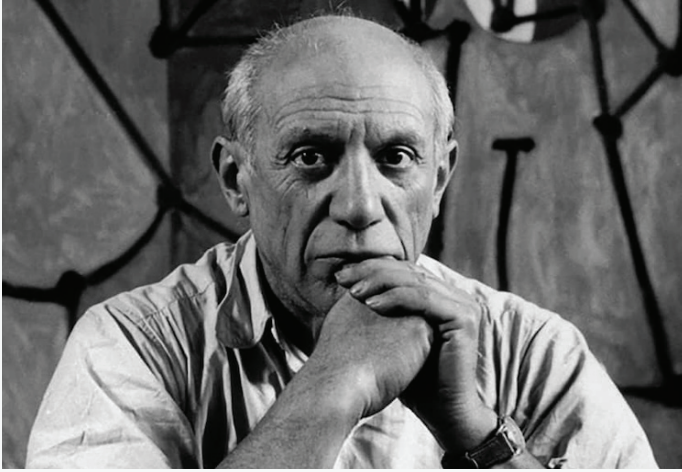
Refine and complete artistic work.

- Students will refine their Cubist-inspired ceramic designs by experimenting with different glaze applications, refining textures, and adjusting the shape of their wall hangings to improve the overall composition.

Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.

- Students will analyze the effectiveness of their ceramic pieces by considering the visual impact of their Cubist design and how glazing enhances or detracts from their intended expression.
- Students will participate in peer critiques, interpreting how their classmates applied Cubist principles and glazing techniques, offering constructive feedback for improvement.

MEET THE MASTER



Pablo Picasso

(1881-1973) was a Spanish artist who became one of the most influential figures in modern art. He is best known for co-founding Cubism, a revolutionary art style that changed how people viewed and created art. Instead of painting things the way they looked, Picasso broke them down into geometric shapes and showed different perspectives at once, creating abstract and fragmented images.

Throughout his career, Picasso explored many different styles and mediums, including painting, sculpture, ceramics, and printmaking. His works often reflected his emotions and experiences, and he was always experimenting with new techniques. Some of his most famous works include *Les Femmes d'Alger*, *Guernica*, and *The Weeping Woman*. Picasso's art challenged traditional ideas and helped shape the direction of modern art in the 20th century.

"Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up."
– Pablo Picasso



SUPPLY LIST

CLAY

- Clay body of choice

BRUSHES AND TOOLS

- Rolling pin
- Bowl of water
- Sponge
- Carving tools (toothpick)
- Low fire clay (3lbs)
- Pencil or stylus
- Cutting tool (clay knife or needle tool)
- Sharpie pens (black and blue)
- Dry erase marker



COLORS BY MAYCO

This project encourages the use of a diverse array of glazes, making it the perfect end-of-year project; allowing students to use up remaining glazes from the school year. Our samples use Elements™, Stroke & Coat®, Jungle Gems™, Foundations®, Cobblestone, and Classic Crackles® glazes.

- [Elements™ glazes](#) produce lush, organic, and earthy hues and are inspired by aspects of nature. They vary in gloss and matte finishes.
- [Stroke & Coat® glazes](#) are heavily pigmented, viscous glazes that can be used for brush strokes, opaque coverage, and in design.
- [Jungle Gems™ Crystal Glazes](#) transform in the kiln when the small pieces of glass frit burst into color and intricate patterns during the firing process. They're great for adding dramatic, colorful effects to finished pieces.
- [Foundations® glazes](#) are available in gloss opaque, gloss translucent and matte finishes. They also dry quickly, allowing for immediate additional decorating.
- [Cobblestone](#) creates a textured "cobbled" surface when fired. Apply over another glaze and during the firing process a shattered pattern of raised, irregular chips will emerge. The underlying glaze will appear in the cracks.
- [Classic Crackles®](#) are glazes that are designed to "craze"; that is, develop subtle surface cracks in the finished glaze.

ACTIVITY

These steps will guide students through the creation of a Picasso-inspired ceramic artwork, allowing them to experiment with design, texture, and glazing techniques while exploring Cubism in 3D form.

1. Introduction and Inspiration

- Begin by showing examples of Picasso's Cubist artwork, focusing on geometric shapes and abstract forms. Discuss how Cubism deconstructs objects and scenes into multiple perspectives.

2. Design and Sketch

- Have students sketch their ideas for their ceramic piece. Encourage them to break down faces, objects, or scenes into basic geometric shapes like squares, triangles, and circles.
- Wall hangings should be flat with a focus on shape, texture and pattern.

3. Slab Construction

- Roll out clay slabs to the desired thickness (about 1/4 inch).
- Cut out geometric shapes based on their designs, using a ruler and templates to maintain uniformity and precision.
- Use scoring and slipping techniques to attach pieces and ensure they stick together.

4. Carving and Detailing

- Once the basic form is assembled, students can carve into the clay, adding texture and detail to enhance the Cubist effect. This might include abstract lines, fragmented facial features, or geometric patterns.
- Gently brush any small shavings away with a soft brush as the piece dries.
- Ensure that the surface is smooth and refined to prepare for glazing.

5. Drying and First Firing

- Allow the pieces to slowly dry.
- Once dry, bisque fire the ceramics in the kiln to prepare them for glazing.

6. Glazing

- Discuss the variety of glazes available (glossy, matte, transparent, underglaze) and how each can be used creatively.
- Students apply a combination of glazes to their pieces, experimenting with different finishes and layering techniques. Encourage them to use leftover glazes creatively, mixing colors and experimenting with textures.

7. Final Firing

- Once the glaze has been applied, fire the pieces in the kiln again to bring out the color and finish of the glazes.

8. Reflection and Display

- Once the pieces are cooled, have students reflect on the process and how their piece connects to Cubist principles.
- Students can display their pieces in a class exhibition, focusing on how their use of geometric shapes, abstraction, and color creates a dynamic visual impact.

ACCOMODATIONS

Here are some accomodations that can support a diverse range of learners for this project:

Modified Instructions: Provide clear, step-by-step written and visual instructions to help students who need additional guidance. This can include visual aids like diagrams or video tutorials for the hand-building techniques.

Extra Time: Offer extended class time or individual sessions for students who may need more time to complete their sculptures.

Peer Support: Pair students with peers for collaborative support, allowing for shared ideas and guidance during the creation and glazing process.

Alternative Glazing Techniques: For students with fine motor difficulties, offer alternative glazing methods, like dipping, which may be easier to control.

Sensory Accomodations: For students with sensory processing challenges, offer a quiet, distraction-free area to work to minimize sensory overload during the creation and firing processes.

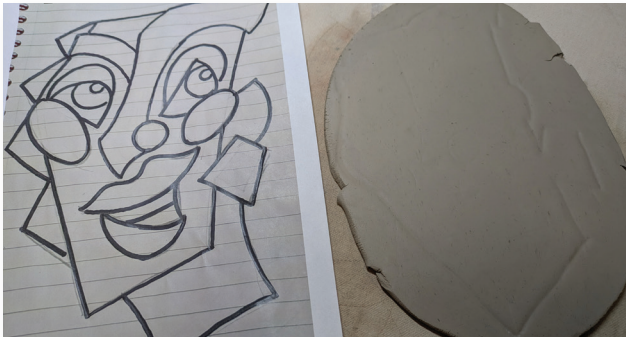
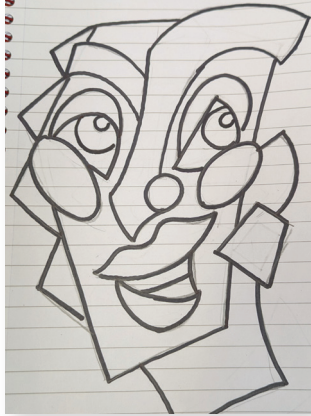
Visual and Color Choices: Allow flexibility with the color schemes for students who may have color vision deficiencies, ensuring they can select shades that work best for them.

Modified Assessment Criteria: Adjust the evaluation rubric to emphasize progress and effort for students who may struggle with certain technical aspects but show growth and creativity in their process.

DIRECTIONS

BUILDING

1. Begin by sketching out your Picasso inspired face on a piece of paper the same size as your final clay piece. If needed, blow up your sketch to the correct size after drawing.
2. Roll out a slab of clay slightly larger than your sketch. Compress both sides of the slab with a plastic card. Lay your sketch on top of the slab of clay. Using a stylus or pen, lightly trace only the outside lines of your sketch. Remove paper and cut out the outlined area with a knife or needle tool to create the base of the Picasso face.



3. Trace and cut out any smaller accent pieces of the face from the leftover pieces of slab (lips, nose, cheeks, etc.). Set these pieces aside for later. Roll up all your excess clay, wedge, and flatten into another slab. Set your sketch on top of this



larger slab, and trace around the section of the sketch that will be the middle layer of the face. You should have three layers of clay cutouts; the base layer, the middle face layer, and the cutouts for the smaller accent pieces as the third layer.

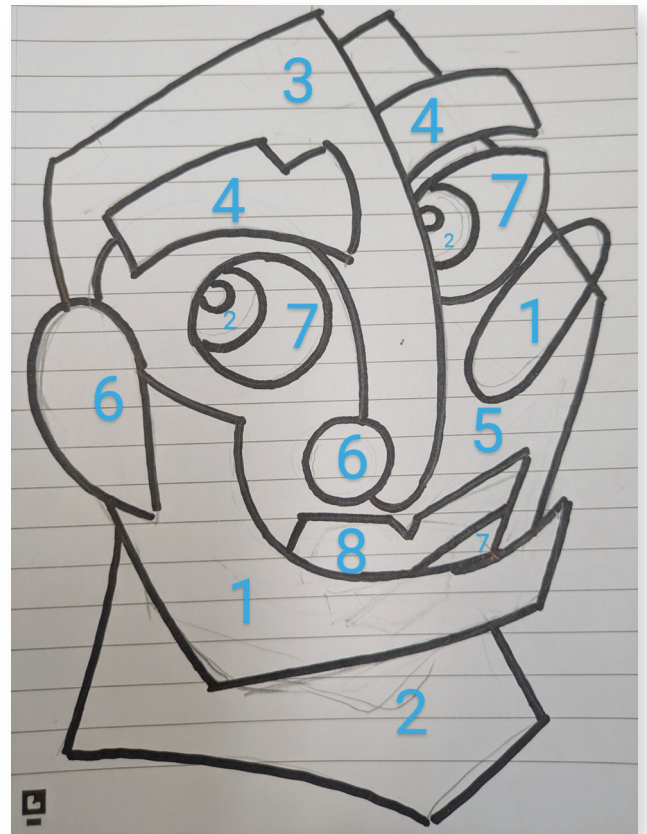
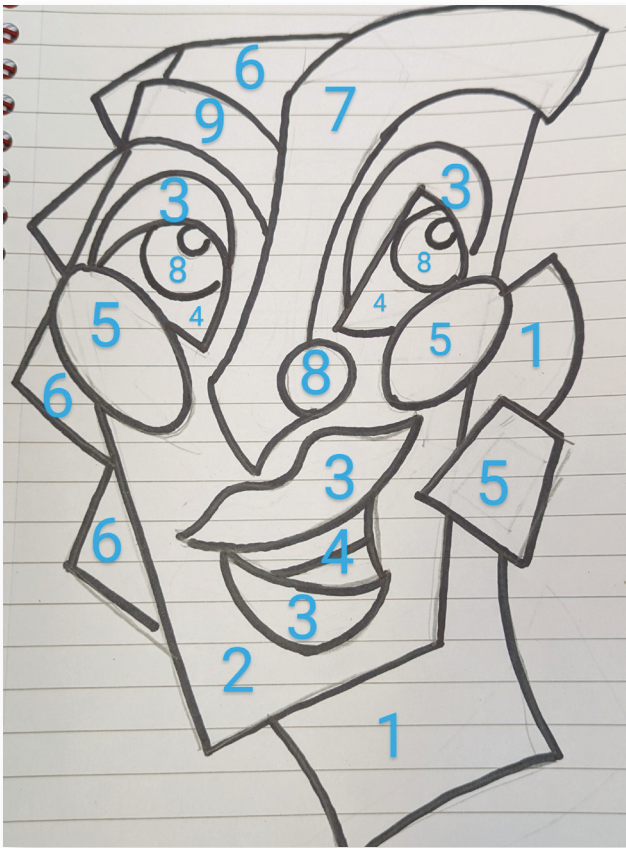
4. Scratch and attach the middle layer slab to the bottom layer slab. Apply slip or water to the areas being attached. Scratch and attach (with water or slip) all accent pieces to the middle layer slab. Smooth down the attachment points with a toothpick. Carve in any middle layer details, like eyes, and create textures on each part of the slabs using found objects or tools. If needed, carve out the back of the face to reduce the amount of clay in the piece. Allow the clay to fully dry. Bisque fire to cone 04.



DIRECTIONS

GLAZING

Apply three layers of all glazes on all sections using an appropriately sized brush for the area.



1. EL130 Sea Green
2. FN042 Teal Blue
3. EL124 Stormy Blue
4. FN011 Light Blue
5. EL149 Lavender Flower
6. CG1006 Purple Reign
7. CG974 Bloomin' Blue
8. CC107 Green Tea
9. FN054 Pistachio and SG202 White Cobblestone over the top
10. Outline and pupils: SC015 Tuxedo

Antique the crackle glaze (Green Tea area) by randomly coloring in the area with the blue Sharpie and then go over the area with a dry erase marker to remove excess color. After firing crackle glazes you may not see the cracks until you apply color over the top. Other methods include rubbing India ink or other fluid colors over the top to enhance the crackle pattern.

1. CG753 Sassy Orange
2. EL121 Copper Adventurine
3. CG1002 Day Lily
4. EL127 Rose Granite
5. FN002 Yellow
6. FN051 Strawberry
7. CC102 White
8. FN051 Strawberry under SG201 Black Cobblestone
9. Outline and pupils: SC015 Tuxedo

Use a black Sharpie pen to antique the crackle glaze. Remove the pen with a dry erase marker.

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

LINGUISTIC (Word Smart)

Assign a brief written or oral presentation on Cubism, focusing on key artists like Picasso or Braque and their influence on art history.

Teach art-specific terms (e.g., abstract, geometric, glaze, bisque, kiln), and have students incorporate them into a reflective paragraph about the project.

SPATIAL (Picture Smart)

Have students plan and arrange their wall hangings as part of a collaborative Cubist-inspired installation, focusing on spatial relationships between individual pieces.

Encourage students to incorporate cutouts or openings in their designs, emphasizing the balance between solid forms and empty spaces.

INTERPERSONAL (People Smart)

Create a classroom gallery where students display their work and act as "docents," explaining their pieces to peers, teachers, or invited guests.

Divide the class into teams to discuss and debate the significance of Cubism compared to other art movements, fostering critical thinking and collaboration.

BODY KINESTHETIC (Body Smart)

Start with quick, large-scale gesture drawings inspired by Cubism, then have students translate those movements and shapes into their ceramic designs.

Encourage students to use everyday objects (e.g., fabric, tools, leaves) to physically press textures into their clay, engaging their hands in creative experimentation.

NATURALIST (Nature Smart)

Research and discuss the use of sustainable or natural materials in ceramic glazing and how artists can reduce their environmental impact.

Have students collect textures from nature (e.g., bark, leaves, stones) and use them to create impressions in their clay to add depth and connection to the environment.

LOGICAL/ MATHEMATICAL (Number Smart)

Encourage students to incorporate tessellation patterns into their ceramic designs, emphasizing repetition and mathematical precision in their artwork.

Challenge students to create a smaller sketch or model of their wall hanging and then scale it up accurately to a larger clay version, focusing on proportions and measurements.

INTRAPERSONAL (Self Smart)

Ask students to create a Cubist self-portrait in their design, abstracting aspects of their personality, emotions, or identity into geometric shapes.

Have students set personal goals for their project (e.g., trying a new technique or overcoming a challenge) and reflect on their growth and learning at the end of the lesson.

MUSIC (Music Smart)

Have students listen to different types of music (e.g., jazz, classical, or electronic) while creating their Cubist ceramic pieces, encouraging them to reflect on how rhythm and tempo can influence the shapes and forms in their artwork.

Explore the concept of layering in music (e.g., polyphony in jazz) and apply it to the idea of layering shapes and textures in their ceramic Cubism designs. Students could create a visual "composition" that mirrors musical layering techniques.

RUBRIC

	4 - EXCELLENT	3 - PROFICIENT	2 - DEVELOPING	1 - NEEDS IMPROVEMENT
DESIGN & CONCEPT	The design is highly original, well-planned, and fully reflects Cubist principles. Geometric abstraction and fragmentation are clearly evident.	The design is original and follows Cubist principles, but may lack some clarity or complexity in the use of geometric shapes.	The design is somewhat related to Cubism but lacks clarity or full use of geometric abstraction.	The design is unclear or does not demonstrate Cubist principles.
CONSTRUCTION & TECHNIQUE	The piece is expertly crafted with clean, precise edges, well-constructed forms, and flawless attachment.	The piece is well-constructed with only minor imperfections in attachment or shaping.	The construction is somewhat rough with visible cracks, uneven surfaces, or poor attachment.	The construction is weak with significant flaws, cracks, or poor attachment.
CARVING & DETAILING	Intricate and thoughtful carving; adds depth, texture, and complexity to the Cubist design.	Carving is present and enhances the design, but lacks intricate detail or complexity.	Carving is minimal or lacks depth, texture, and integration into the overall design.	Little to no carving, or it detracts from the overall design.
GLAZING	Excellent use of a variety of glazes, creating depth, contrast, and dynamic visual impact. Leftover glazes are used creatively.	Good use of a variety of glazes, creating some depth and contrast. Leftover glazes are used in a basic manner.	Limited use of glazes; some areas are over-glazed or lack contrast and visual interest.	Inconsistent or improper glazing; little to no variety in glaze application.
OVERALL PRESENTATION	The finished piece is visually striking, cohesive, and fully embraces the theme with clear Cubist influence.	The piece is visually appealing and cohesive, with a noticeable Cubist influence.	The piece is somewhat cohesive but lacks strong Cubist elements or visual impact.	The piece lacks cohesion and does not clearly reflect the Cubist theme.

Total Score: ____/20

PERFORMANCE LEVELS
<p>16-20 POINTS (A): EXCELLENT WORK, DEMONSTRATING STRONG MASTERY OF CONCEPTS, TECHNIQUES, AND CREATIVITY.</p> <p>11-15 POINTS (B): GOOD WORK, SHOWING CLEAR UNDERSTANDING WITH ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT IN SOME AREAS.</p> <p>6-10 POINTS (C): DEVELOPING, WITH NOTICEABLE GAPS IN TECHNIQUE, CREATIVITY, OR ADHERENCE TO THE PROJECT'S THEME.</p> <p>BELOW 5 POINTS (D/F): NEEDS SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENT, WITH MANY AREAS OF CONCERN IN TECHNIQUE OR CONCEPT.</p>