



LESSON PLANS

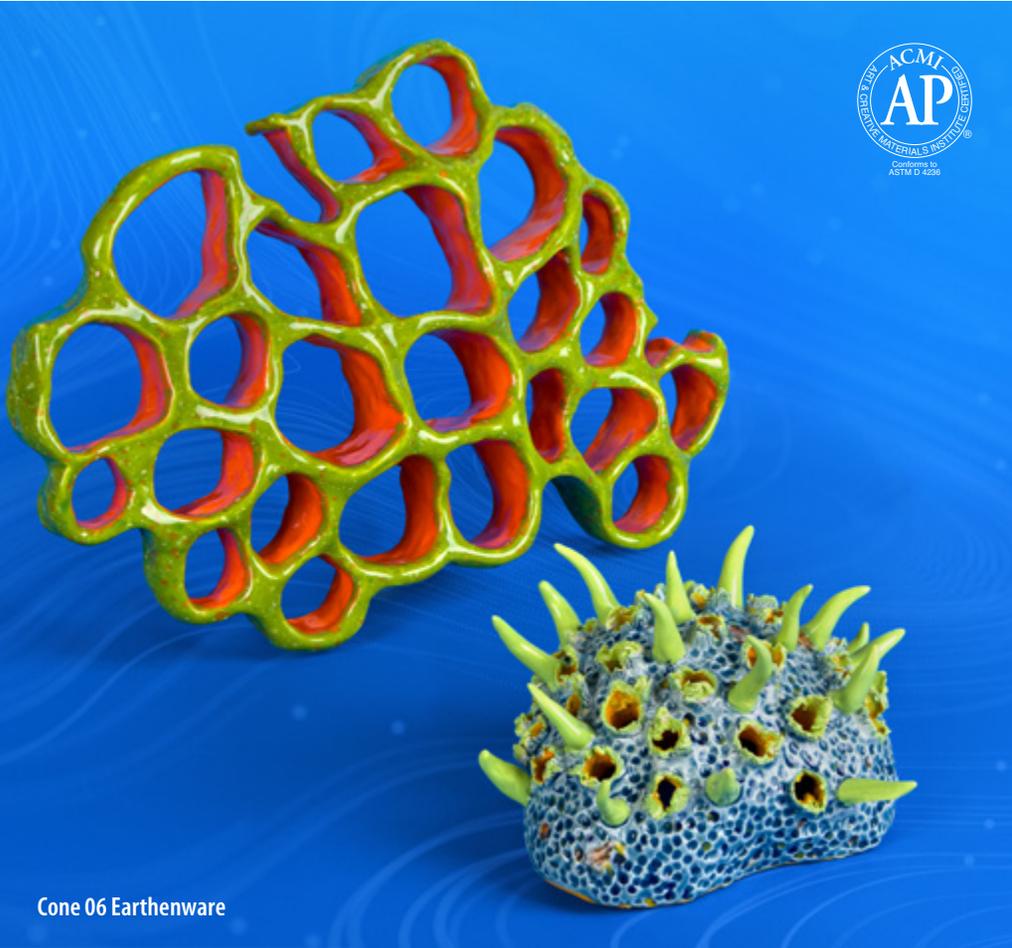
PRIMARY-ADVANCED CLAY PROJECTS



Making Art Part of the Educational Landscape
and Supporting the National Art Standards

Under the Lens: Microorganisms

 Suggested Levels: 5th Grade - Advanced



Cone 06 Earthenware

 SCAN ME



Scan to get the full lesson plan with NVAS, Objectives and Lesson Extensions.

This lesson plan encourages students to create abstract clay sculptures inspired by the forms, textures, and movement of microorganisms. Using slab, piercing, and pinching techniques, they'll construct dynamic sculptures, then finish with Mayco Jungle Gems™ and Stroke & Coat® glazes that emphasize texture and a three-dimensional quality.



DID YOU KNOW?

Fun for students of all ages, Jungle Gems™ contain small crystals which bloom during the firing process. The crystal blooms mimic microscopic patterns that add depth and surprise to students' work. They can also be layered together or used with other glazes for additional color variation.



TEACHER TIPS

- Spark creativity with a group discussion by asking, "Which part of this microbe looks like art already?"
- When glazing, encourage students to apply glaze both inside and around holes to create depth.
- Control slab drying carefully to prevent warping and maintain structural integrity.
- Remind students that sculptures don't have a single "front" and to continually rotate their work. This helps them think in full 360° and build balanced forms.



SUPPLIES

- Jungle Gems™ Crystal Glazes
- Stroke & Coat® Glazes
- Carving and modeling tools
- Slip and scoring supplies
- Sponge
- Glaze brushes
- Tools for texture (mesh, stamps, combs, natural items)



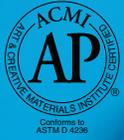
MEET THE MASTER

Students can take inspiration from Eva Zeisel, known for her elegant, organic modernist tableware. The playful, organic forms embody the type of abstraction students will explore.



American Folk Art Fish Decoys

 Suggested Levels: 6th Grade - Advanced



Cone 06 Earthenware



DID YOU KNOW?

Fundamentals® Underglaze provides bold, opaque color similar to folk palettes. Adding a clear glaze over the matte finish adds shine and depth, enhancing the vibrancy of the carved textures and details. Experiment with both finishes to create unique surface effects!



TEACHER TIPS

- When comparing utilitarian and decorative folk art, highlight how each serves a different purpose; function versus aesthetic expression.
- Two thin coats beat one thick coat. Underglazes like to be built up with thin even layers to reduce cracking, flaking and brushstrokes.



SUPPLIES

- Fundamentals® Underglazes
- Carving and modeling tools
- Slip and scoring supplies
- Ribs
- Sponge
- Glaze brushes
- Tools for texture (mesh, stamps, combs, natural items)



MEET THE MASTER

Karen Karnes was an American ceramist who blended function and artistry. While not known for fish decoys, her salt-glazed utilitarian ware reflects the balance of purpose and beauty in folk tradition.



SCAN ME



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Growing Expressions Wall Pods

 Suggested Levels: 7th Grade - Advanced



Cone 06 Earthenware

SCAN ME



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Students will create a slab-built wall pod with a sculpted mask or face. Masks are one of the oldest art forms, expressing identity and culture. Through this project, students will explore identity, self-expression and storytelling while making functional artwork. Elements™ glazes are used to give the piece an organic feel, enhancing the tactile quality of the surface.



DID YOU KNOW?

Elements™ glazes enhance masks with nature-inspired tones that emphasize facial features while harmonizing with surrounding greenery. Students can easily mix and layer colors to create depth and shading. These glazes also emphasize textured clay surfaces, adding visual interest to each mask.



TEACHER TIPS

- Inspire students to exaggerate facial features for symbolic effect.
- Dry slabs slowly to maintain structural integrity and prevent cracks.
- Remind your students that the plants will add unique characteristics to their pieces, turning them into dynamic artworks with wild hair and intriguing, spiky growth!



SUPPLIES

- Elements™ or Elements™ Chunkies Glazes
- Clay tools (needle, ribs, ribbon, carving and modeling tools)
- Clay hole cutter
- Glaze brushes and sponges
- Plastic wrap or wet box
- Optional: artificial or small live plant
- Stencil (for water etching)



MEET THE MASTER

Artist Nick Cave is known for creating “Soundsuits”, which are wearable sculptures that cover the entire body and conceal a person’s race, gender, and identity. Nick combines elements of masks and costumes to explore themes of identity and culture. Like Cave’s work, the masks will allow students to explore self-expression with color, texture, and design.



Wise Forms: Symbolic Owls

 Suggested Levels: 6th Grade - Advanced



Cone 06 Earthenware



DID YOU KNOW?

Foundations® offer a variety of opaque and sheer color options that highlight texture and detail. Foundations® work well in the classroom as they are quick drying, allowing students work to get into the kiln faster. The color in the jar is similar to the fired color, which assists in selecting colors.



TEACHER TIPS

- Stress the importance of hollow construction to prevent cracking during firing. To prevent cracking, use a wet box or plastic wrap to slow the drying process. Gradually prop open the box or remove the wrap to ensure even drying.
- Encourage students to use exaggerated features for stronger expression and character in their work.
- Demonstrate how layering glazes can create surface variety and depth to the final piece.



SUPPLIES

- Foundations® Glazes
- Carving and modeling tools
- Slip and scoring supplies
- Ribs
- Sponge
- Glaze brushes
- Tools for texture (mesh, stamps, combs, natural items)



HISTORICAL CONNECTION

Owls have long been symbols of wisdom, mystery, and protection across cultures. In Ancient Greece, the owl appeared on pottery and coins such as the “owl tetradrachms.” These enduring images inspire students to see owls as carriers of cultural meaning.



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ART SPARKS

DESIGN PROMPTS

Fresh, focused project ideas that include fun techniques, favorite tools, and features Mayco glazes! These quick sparks of inspiration are perfect for busy art teachers.

Creative Identity Tile

More than just a name, it's a mini self-portrait in clay! Each student will design and sculpt a textured ceramic tile that includes their name plus symbols, patterns, or images that represent who they are, where they're from, or what they love. Students' work could be used to create a collaborative wall display that says "This is our creative community".



Mood Monsters

Create small clay creatures that embody different emotions—like joy, sadness, worry, or excitement.

Students design a creature that shows what that feeling looks like in monster form. A great Social Emotional Learning crossover that encourages empathy, expression, and creativity.



Opting for Mayco's Class Packs instead of individual bottles of glaze offers multiple benefits! Class Packs include the most popular colors at a value price, making them a convenient choice that simplifies the preparation process. Visit MaycoColors.com to see all of the available Class Packs.



Wishing Leaves

Students will press a leaf into clay and inscribe a word, mantra, expression of gratitude, or meaningful quote at its center. Glaze using washes, transparent glazes, or layered colors to highlight texture and words.

Hidden Compartment Box

Invite students to sculpt a small, lidded box that hides something special inside. Whether it is a symbolic treasure or a keepsake, these boxes combine function with imagination. The challenge: design a container with personality while making sure the lid fits snugly!



Want more
Art Sparks?

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Lesson Plans?

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STUDENT SPOTLIGHT

Celebrate Your Students' Creativity!



*Piece made by Rhyan,
12th grade student from Ohio.*

**SCAN ME
TO SUBMIT
YOUR ENTRY!**

How it Works



Submit up to 5 student ceramic pieces that use Mayco glaze



Winners picked throughout the year



Students featured win \$250, and teachers receive their choice of Mayco glaze kits. Everyone wins!



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