

1st Grade: February
Lesson 4: Coil Pot
Clay Sculpture

Note: This lesson can easily take 1½ hours. Please remind your teacher and your aides of the longer-than-usual time window and reserve enough time in the art calendar accordingly.

Objective: To create a clay coil pot, using clay forming techniques

Technique: Sculpting with clay

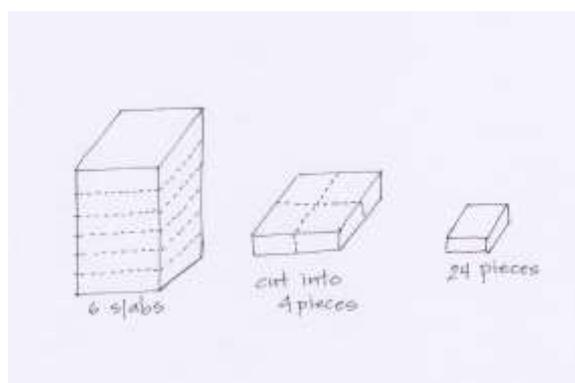
Set-up: (before lesson starts, docent and aides)

One (1), 25 pound block of clay

Clay wire with toggle handles to cut clay, and RULER to measure slabs

Plastic (grocery) bags to wrap extra clay pieces (if clay is cut ahead of the lesson)

Clay cutting guide:



Tip: Clay dries out quickly, if cut in advance (no more than 24 hrs.) wrap each piece individually in plastic (grocery bags work well)

Set-up: (before lesson starts, docent and aides)

Newspaper to cover desks

Slip container (shake slip before pouring)

Cups for slip (only fill ¼ way with slip)

Clay boards

Clay tools: toothpicks, plastic knives

small styrofoam bowl to use as construction form

Paper napkins or towels

Spray bottles (use sparingly to keep clay projects moist)

Visuals:
Student Sample

Props: Pot with attachments

Teaching the lesson: (1 ½ hours, total)

Give your aides a brief summary of the lesson

Introduce yourself and your aides

Today you will create a coil pot. Show sample coil pot. You will be rolling strips of clay into long, thin rolls to form the walls of your pot. You will learn how to attach these separate pieces of clay together, to form a single sculpture, using slip to smooth the inside of your pot.

1. Review (3 min)

A WORD ABOUT SLIP AND ATTACHMENTS

Always use slip when adding clay pieces. Slip is a creamy mixture of water and clay.

- Score (scratch) the two surface areas to be connected, apply slip to both scored spots, attach and press firmly to press out any air gaps between the attachment joint. In effect the two pieces of clay have fused into one. Smooth joint by pressing/blending together with finger or thumb. Briefly,

SCORE both surfaces,
SLIP both surfaces,
ATTACH,
PRESS TOGETHER
SMOOTH the joint

Note for art aides:

- **As tempting as it may be, do not “fix” features unless it is for the sake of structural integrity**
- **Allow students’ creations to be their creation.**
- **Demonstrate any suggestions on scrap clay, not student sculptures**
- **Use spray bottles as necessary to keep clay from cracking**
- **Help students keep pace with the lesson**
- **Check to make sure clay is not too thin, that pieces are securely attached and names are on the bottom of the base**

2. Cut the clay and form pot base (5-7 min)
 - Direct students to cut off a slice of their clay block, with the plastic knife. Cut along the smallest side, about 1 inch thick.
 - With smaller piece, pat cut clay into a palm-sized round patty. Keep the disc round and even in thickness to form the coil pot base.
 - Set base aside

Note: Throughout construction, direct aides to walk around with a spray bottle to lightly spritz the pots that are starting to look dry/cracked.

3. Rolling the coils (10-15 min)
 - Show how to make a coil. Break off a golf-ball size chunk of clay and roll it between your hands to form a thick snake-like shape.
 - Put the “snake” on a flat surface. Starting with your fingertips, roll the clay down to the bottom of the palm of your hand and back to your fingertips.
 - Repeat this motion moving up and down the coil, gradually increasing pressure until the coil is about a ½-inch in diameter. If the thickness of the coil is uneven, place your hand over the thicker spots and roll with a little pressure.
 - Break off additional golf-ball chunks, and repeat the process of rolling them into coils until all remaining clay has been used
4. Building the pot (20-25 min)
 - Scribe student initials and room # on bottom of clay disc. Place starter clay disc, initials side down, inside the foam bowl. Press centered disc into the bottom of the bowl. Continue with coil assembly and attachments using bowl to guide pot shape.
 - The first coil added to the base must be attached using the scratch and slip method. With a pointed stick, scratch the clay around the outside edge of the base. Attach the first coil along the scratched area of the base with a small amount of slip. Gently blend a small amount of clay from the coil into the base.
 - If the coil is placed slightly on the outside edge of the coil below it, the pot will gradually flare open.
 - As each coil runs out, attach a new coil directly against the end of the previous coil and blend them together with fingers. After the first coil is attached to the base, it is not necessary to use the scratch and slip method to attach the rest of the coils.
 - Inside the pot, join the coils by gently pushing a small amount of clay from the top coil into the coil below it. Turn the pot while joining and smoothing the coils.
 - Be sure that wherever a coil touches another coil, the two coils must be joined together with slip or the pot will fall apart as it dries.

5. Finish, smooth and complete the pot (7-10 min)
 - Explain that the top of the pot is called the *lip*, and it needs to be finished carefully to give the form a completed look.
 - Write name and room number on the bottom of the pot with pointed stick
 - Use slip to smooth and fill in any cracks inside the pot and smooth interior coils

Note: Slip and smooth coils as much as possible. Docent and aides should go around and make sure that every sculpture is properly built and attached into a smooth whole.

Clean-up: (after lesson ends, docent and aides)

Close the lesson, clean up the classroom

Display sculptures in a safe drying area in the classroom

(cardboard box tops are helpful for keeping the pots)

Return clay materials to bin: clay boards, pointed sticks, plastic knives

Return all materials to the art closet

Finishing the clay projects: (refer to clay schedule)

Dry in class: Complete drying will take up to five or six weeks. When totally bone dry (will not feel cold or moist to the touch).

Transport to kiln room: The sculptures need to be taken the kiln room (according to kiln schedule) to be bisque fired. Transport clay figures to the kiln room in boxes labeled with room number, teacher name and date, docent name and contact info.

Glazing: After bisque firing is complete, arrange times with teacher for glazing (usually done in small groups at the back of the class during other lessons). The sculptures can be immediately returned to the kiln room, and then will be glaze fired.

Transport to classroom: After firing, projects need to be picked up and returned to the classroom.



Student sample: Coil Pot