

**5th Grade: November Lesson
2: Self Portrait, Head 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: Form a clay bust self portrait.

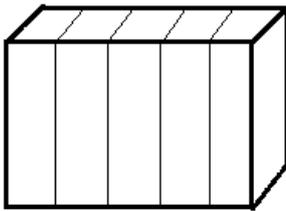
Technique: Sculpting with clay

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

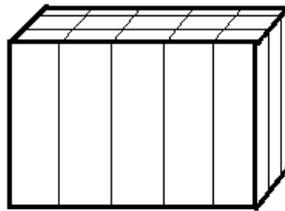
One and one-half (1 ½), 25 pound blocks of clay (use the extra clay for attachments)
Clay wire with toggle handles to cut clay, and RULER to measure slabs
Plastic (grocery) bags to wrap extra clay pieces

Clay cutting guide:

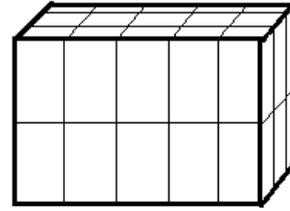
Note: clay blocks measure 10 inches x 6 inches x 6 inches



make 4 cuts into slab
2 inches apart



make 2 additional cuts
2 inches apart



cut in half, total = 30 pieces
3 inches apart

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
Clay tools: pointed sticks
Clay boards
Spray bottles (use sparingly to keep clay projects moist)
Paper napkins or towels

Visuals:

Sample artwork
Bust formation

Props: Head sculpture

Teaching the Lesson (1 hour, total)

Give your aides a brief summary of the lesson

Introduce yourself and your aides

In sculpture, a portrait of a person's face often includes the neck and part of the shoulders. These artworks are called portrait busts: a 3-D form with height, width and depth. Today you will create your own portrait bust of yourself.

1. Review (5 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. Roll, pinch and form (20 min)

- Show Bust formation
- With the piece of clay, round edges, compress clay in hands so that it resembles a large smooth cylinder form
- Pinch clay about 1/3 of the way up from the bottom to form the neck and shoulders
- Form a round/oval head above the pinched neck
- Press the body slightly to widen the shoulders

3. Create the features (15-20 min)

- Use thumbs, fingers, and carving tools to shape facial features
- Position and shape major features first
- EYES: Position eye sockets half way between top and bottom of head. Use thumbs to push-in sockets. This will create a brow line, the bridge of the nose, and

cheekbones. Eyes can be pressed or carved into socket or built up with small discs of clay. Eyebrows can be indicated with scribing or attaching.

- NOSE: Half way between horizontal centerline of eye socket and bottom of chin is the approximate placement of the bottom of the nose. Shape the end of the nose by pinching and pulling clay into place or adding clay using the “Score, Slip, Attach” method. Blend surface so attachments fuse into surface of face.
- MOUTH and CHIN: The mouth position is a little less than half way between bottom of nose and chin. Press or carve the horizontal line between the lips. Shape lips above and below their centerline. Note their curves, their direction, fullness of lower lip compared to upper lip. Feel the inward curve just below the lip and the outward curve of the tip of the chin. Shape the chin (push/pull/pinch) accordingly. Notice how far forward the chin is from the neck. Pinch and shape neck accordingly.
- EARS: The top of the ears are usually in alignment with the eyes. Bottom of ears are usually in alignment with mouth. Feel this. The EAR may be attached using the “Score, Slip, Attach” method: Make a small roll of clay much like a caterpillar/worm and shape it into a “C” shape or like the handle of a teacup. Adjust for size and shape; and whether lobe is attached or detached.
- HAIR: Hair may be added or created with tools. Hair should be represented with larger masses, not individual strands like spaghetti. Small, skinny attachments WILL break when drying and during the firing. Glasses and hair (pony tails) should be FIRMLY secured to part of the head or they will break off when drying, getting moved, or during the firing process.

4. Shape and details (15-20 min)

- Adjust so that proportions are realistic
- Show expression by pinching and pulling
- Use pointed stick to etch and finishing textures and details

5. Revise and complete (5 min)

- **Write name and room number on the bottom of the base with pointed stick**
- Check all attachments have been scored and slipped to head, pressed firmly together, and not too thin
- Use slip to smooth and fill in cracks and attachments

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

Close the lesson, clean up the classroom

Display busts in a safe drying area in the classroom

(cardboard-box tops are helpful for keeping the figures)

Return extra slip to storage container

Wash and dry slip containers

Return clay materials to bin: clay boards and sticks

Return all materials to the art closet

Finishing the clay projects:

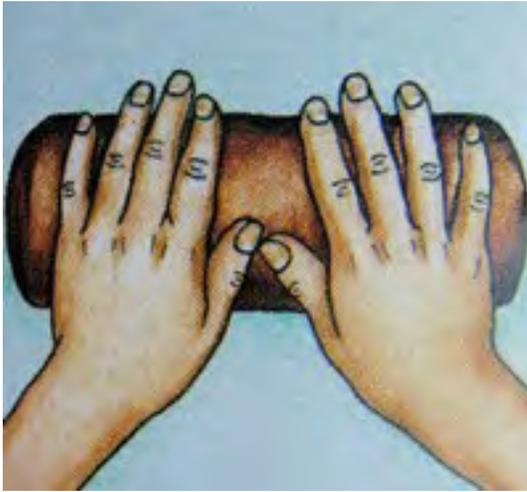
Dry in class: Complete drying will take up to five or six weeks. When totally bone dry (will not feel cold or moist to the touch).

Transport to kiln room: The busts need to be taken the kiln room (according to kiln schedule) to be bisque fired. Transport clay busts 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 busts 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.

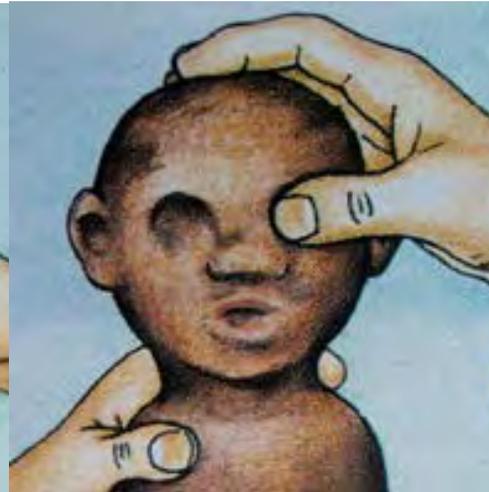
Head Sculpture, the process



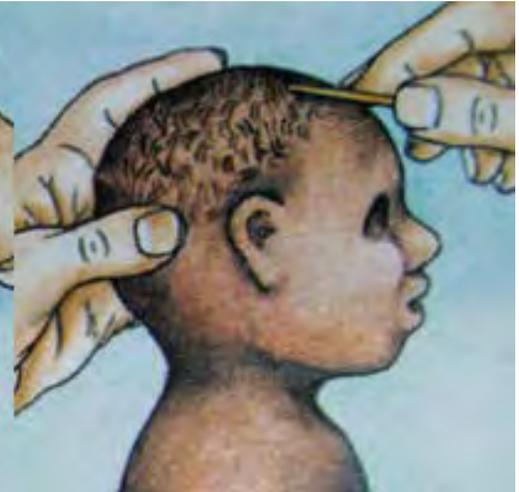
Shape the cylinder, without making it too long. Think "soup can" size.



Shape neck at least 2/3 of the way down.



Push, Pinch, Pull, Add



Work from all sides for balance and symmetry of features.

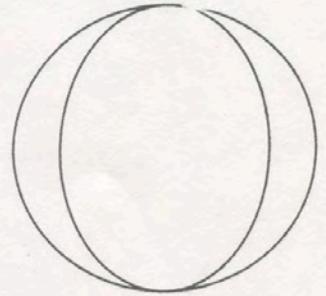


Sample artwork

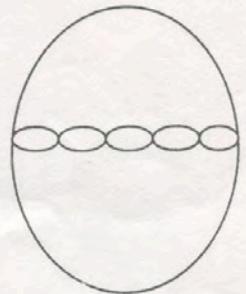
FIFTH GRADE ART LESSON

SCULPTURE OF THE HEAD IN CLAY

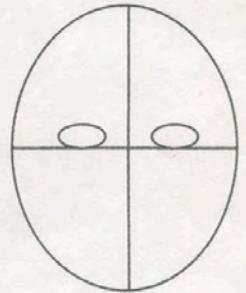
- 1) The average head is not a perfect circle. It is more egg shape, with the smaller end at the bottom.



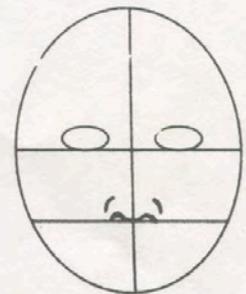
- 2) The average head is 5 eyes wide.



- 3) If the head is divided into fourths, the eyes are placed on the center line.



- 4) Half way between the eyes and the chin, is the bottom of the nose.



- 5) Half way between the bottom of the nose and the chin, are the lips.

