

DECORATIVE OR FUNCTIONAL?

VESSELS WITH ANIMALS OR ANIMALS WITH VESSELS
ART AND SOCIAL STUDIES
GRADES: 9 - 12

BASED ON

William Morris (United States, b. 1957)

Rhyton Vessel, 1998

Glass

Museum Purchase with funds provided by Mr. and Mrs. Robert E. Boeh, 1999.5

OBJECTIVES

- Students will review rhyton vessels and animal sculptures, particularly *Rhyton Vessel* by William Morris.
- Students will discuss the concept of linking a bowl or drinking vessel with an animal and the place and time in history when these vessels were used.
- Students will research an animal and sketch a pinch/animal combo idea, keeping the scale small.
- Students will pinch a small bowl and sculpt approximately a 4" animal figure in clay. Textures, props, and placement will need to be considered, as well as how the pinch bowl will 'work with' the animal.
- Students will write a self-evaluation and join in a group critique.

CONCEPT

Students have the opportunity to think about both the functional and decorative aspects of clay. They examine and discuss rhyton vessels, when and how they were used. Are they functional? How does the animal connect to the bowl/vessel, creating unity? With research, sketching, pinching and modeling, each student uses clay to create a small, unique version of a rhyton vessel. The students complete a self-evaluation about their project and the challenges with their sculptural vessel.

MATERIALS

Image of the *Rhyton Vessel*, glass sculpture

Low fire white clay 3/4 lb per student

Canvas covered boards

Rolling pins

Loop tools (for hollowing out forms)

Wooden skewers/clay tools

Mini extruding tool with various nozzles

Exacto knives

Variety of objects for textures

Zip-lock storage bags

Containers of water/slip

Variety of stains (red and black iron oxide, copper carbonate, nickel oxide green)

Clear glaze, brushes, sponges

PowerPoint of rhyton vessels and project criteria

Reference books on animals

Paper/pencil- for preliminary sketches/ideas

Self-evaluation

Computers with internet access for animal images

(Google specific animals)

VOCABULARY

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Sculpture | Modeling |
| Rhyton Vessels | Additive and Subtractive |
| Slip/score | Pinch technique |
| Modeling | Self-evaluation/critique |
| Unity | Clay stains/glaze |
| Glass-blowing technique | |

PROCEDURE

1. Introduce rhyton vessels with an image of the glass sculpture *Rhyton Vessel* and other vessels and animal sculptures. Discuss the history of these vessels. Challenge the students to research an animal that has meaning to them and sketch out ideas on how they will incorporate a pinch pot with an animal sculpture.
2. Students research an animal and sketch out several ideas on their rhyton vessel. (No snakes, birds, fish or recognizable cartoon characters). Multiple views are part of the preliminary process. Students are reminded that this project will remain small in scale (animal approximately 4").
3. Pinch out the bowl/vessel.
4. Sculpt the animal, modeling the form, adding and subtracting clay.
5. Experiment with texture, the extruder tool, etc. Forms are hollowed out as needed.
6. Connect vessel and animal, making certain to score and slip.
7. After bisque firing, stains are introduced and demonstrated. Students stain their rhyton vessels. Clear glaze is optional, (if students want the vessel to hold liquids).
8. Students complete a self-evaluation. What challenges did they experience? What did they learn? What did they observe in others as they created their sculptures?
9. Group critique focusing on successes and lessons learned.

ASSESSMENT

Students' preliminary sketches and their self evaluations identify the process of creating a vessel with an animal. Individual evaluations of the rhyton vessel will examine the following criteria: meeting the *goals of assignment*, (preliminary sketches of multiple views), approximately 4" clay animal attached to a bowl/vessel, creating unity. Textures, props, and placement considered. Vessel uses a variety of sculpting techniques. Vessel 'stands'. *Successful craftsmanship*: sturdy construction with pieces that are securely attached, keeping in mind the structural qualities of clay including the thickness, air bubbles, and attachments. Thought was given to the many details of the animal, skill is demonstrated in the care and use of materials, time was spent to create all parts of the sculpture, stain/glaze was carefully applied, *overall effort and time used well*, and *creativity/visual impact*.

Reflection/Self-Evaluation includes the following questions:

1. If your animal could speak, what would he/she have to tell us?
2. Identify a specific challenge with your animal vessel and how you met this challenge.
3. What do you like best about your rhyton vessel? Be specific.
4. Reflect on the construction and the glazing of the vessel. What worked? What didn't? What would you like to change?

CLASS EXPERIENCE

5. Which animal vessel do you like best? Why?

NATIONAL STANDARDS

Visual Art

Standard 1- Understands and applies media, techniques and processes related to the visual arts.

Standard 4- Understands the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

Standard 5- Understands the characteristics and merits of one's own artwork and the artwork of others.

Social Studies

World History

Historical Understanding

Standard 2- Understands the historical perspective.

RESOURCES

Glass: artifact & art, Morris, William

Masters: blown glass: Major works by leading artists

Ten Thousand Years of Pottery, Cooper, Emmanuel

William Morris: artifacts & glass, Blonston, Gary

The Desert Southwest: 4000 Years of Life and Art, Hayes, Allan

500 Animals in Clay: Contemporary Expressions of the Animal Form, Lark Books

Various animal books for reference



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