

Lesson Title: Clay Guardians

Targeted grade Level: 4th

Anticipated Time Frame: 5 classes

| Lesson Plan   | Rationale  |
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| <b>Conceptual Structure/Big Idea:</b><br><br><b>Protection</b>  | The big idea of protection is important because we have things that we hold near and want to protect. Protection can also be used to show how we care and show respect for important things in our life.   |
| <b>Key Concepts:</b> ( <i>What ideas, facts, and new knowledge will the students acquire? List the key art concepts that will help students to understand the big idea as an artist. )</i><br><br><b>Students will:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Deepen their understanding of what clay is</li><li>2. How artist honor important things</li><li>3. Further their ability to sculpt using clay</li><li>4. Understand why documentation is important for artists</li></ol> | Through the process of collecting our own clay students will be able to first learn about how clay is formed and what it actually is inside of the classroom. Then apply that knowledge to the real world when digging up clay. The book Golem illustrates someone finding clay in a river bed and using it to protect their home. Students will take inspiration from this and other artists who use materials to honor and protect important things when ideating for their projects. Students will learn how to use clay to create a blocked out figure like shape that they will add and subtract from to add detail. Students will be using tablets to document their findings throughout this project. This will help to teach them about the research and experimenting side of creating art. |

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| <p><b>Objectives:</b> (what students will DO)</p> <p><b>Students will:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gather and prepare clay</li> <li>2. Ideate and conceptualize what it means to protect something they care about</li> <li>3. Use tablets to document their process</li> </ol> | <p>Students will be hands-on in the process of collecting and preparing the clay for use. They will use their tablet to document this process using google slides. This will let students keep a log of the experiments conducted with this natural clay body. This will include documenting sketches, test tiles, references, and reflections. After the clay is prepared students will be able to sketch an idea for what they want to create using this clay. To do this they will have to think about what they want to protect and what that means to them.</p>  |
| <p><b>Essential Questions:</b> (BIG overarching questions)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What does it mean to protect something?</li> <li>2. Where does clay come from and what is it?</li> <li>3. How is it important for artists to document their process?</li> </ol>              | <p>Protection is the main idea of the object the students are creating using clay, so throughout this process students will learn why it is important to protect things like our river where clay comes from, but also how we can protect and honor things we care about. Understanding what clay is can provide students with a new and important perspective on ceramics. An important aspect of being an artist is the research process. By having students research and play with this new material they will be able to learn first hand how this material works. So it is important to provide them with resources and knowledge of how to document this process.</p> |

**Standards:**

NVAS:

**VA:Cr3.1.4a**

**VA:Cr1.1.4a**

Michigan:

**ART.VA.II.4.3**

**ART.VA.I.4.1**

**VA:Cr3.1.4a** - Revise artwork in progress on the basis of insights gained through peer

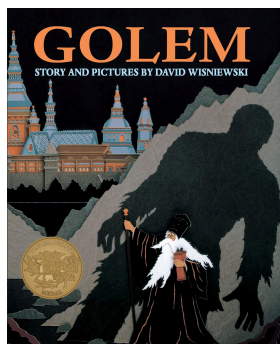
discussion.

**VA:Cr1.1.4a** -Brainstorm multiple approaches to a creative art or design problem.

**ART.VA.II.4.3-** Analyze and collaborate how artists express ideas through the use of visual culture, global perspective, and symbols in works of art.

**ART.VA.I.4.1-** Use technologies to communicate ideas and experiences.

**Teaching Resources:** (artwork, videos, books, etc.)



1.



2. Shawn Farley

3. Amara Abdal Figueroa



The book golem is able to both introduce the main theme of the project, but also give a nod to how the students will be gathering and creating their projects. Shawn Farley creates these sculptures out of found objects. These can be seen as a way to honor and protect the discarded things in life. Amara Figueroa is an amazing ceramist who makes water filters out of natural clay in Puerto Rico. She documents so much of this process and will be a great resource when discussing the documentation and research side of art.

**Lesson Plan Sequence: (4 steps)**

1. First students will be introduced to the book Golem. Then I will tell them about why clay is found in the river. We will then go and dig up the clay from the river and bring it back to class.
2. I will introduce students to the documentation side of the project and I will show them Amara Abdal Figueroa. Students will then experiment and feel what the raw clay feels like. Students will also crush up small bits of dried clay and mix them with water to create a thick slip that can be dried out.
3. As a class they will then make a test tile tray with a biaxial blend using the clay found in the river and the classroom clay. To document the process at each table students will take turns taking pictures so the tablets won't get too messy.
4. After the tray is fired the students will document their findings and begin to ideate and sketch what their guardian is going to be and what it will be protecting.
5. I will show students a sculpting technique to help them to block out the main forms and then how to add and subtract from that to add detail.
6. Once they are fired students will add underglaze or glaze. Students will also finalize and turn in their documentation.

By reading Golem students will understand what the end project will be about. By having the students gather clay it will offer a unique learning experience and provide them to put into action what they have learned about the erosion cycle. Amara Abdal Figueroa is a great example of what documentation looks like. The students will be given worksheets to fill out each day in class that they will take a picture of and then add pictures to at the end of class. The test tile tray is a great example of how ceramists create because there is so much experimentation inside of ceramics. The students must use underglaze or glaze in their final product but they aren't allowed to cover the whole thing, so the students have to incorporate the natural clay in some way. For students to finish the documentation they will have taken pictures of their worksheets and then put them onto google slides, so they can add pictures. Once finished they will turn in the final google slides file.

**Differentiation/Accommodations/Modifications:**

- Providing various sizes and grips of tools for the students to use
- Allowing other students to help each other when documenting
- Helping students when gathering clay

By providing different styles and sizes of tools students can use the ones that are most comfortable to them. If a student is having a hard time taking a photo, another student or I can help them. I will be heavily monitoring and will be the one mainly digging up the clay, and the students will be more helpers. By doing it this way everyone will be able to be involved.

**Photo of Teacher Exemplar (add when completed)**



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| Describe how it feels to touch the river clay before adding the class clay:<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ | Picture of the river clay before adding the class clay<br> | Picture of something you found in the clay<br>            |
| After:<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____  | Picture of the river clay after adding the class clay<br>  | What did you find in the clay?<br>_____<br>_____<br>_____ |

I created this duck as a protector of the river where we collected clay from.

This is an example of a biaxial blend of the clay body.

The document is an example of what a worksheet would look like before the students added reflection and pictures.

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| <p><b>Materials/Tools/Art supplies needed:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clay</li> <li>• Various clay tools</li> <li>• Mats</li> <li>• Tablets</li> <li>• Smocks</li> <li>• Underglaze</li> <li>• Glaze</li> <li>• Paint brushes</li> <li>• Pencils</li> <li>• Paper</li> <li>• Shovels</li> <li>• Buckets</li> <li>• Plaster</li> <li>• Plastic Bags</li> </ul>   | <p>Students will need clay tools to sculpt their final product. They will also need tools to aid in the process of collecting and preparing the clay. Students will use tablets to document their findings.</p>  |
| <p><b>Materials Distribution/Clean Up:</b></p> <p>As a class we will create one biaxial blend so each table will receive enough clay to create one test tile. Each student will receive a ball of clay to create their guardian out of. Clean up will include students covering their projects in a bag and then wiping down their tables and tablets. The tablets will either be disrupted one per student or one per table depending on the school.</p> | <p>The clay will be divided up equally among students, but if a student needs a little extra it will be provided for them. The tablets will remain clean because the students will be told to only touch it once they have washed their hands, so students will stage the clay, wash their hands, then take a photo.</p> |
| <p><b>Presenting</b></p> <p>Students' work will be presented in the hallway with photos of the documentation they created throughout the whole process.</p>   | <p>This will allow people to view the full process of how students got to the final object.</p>  |