

Pinch Pot Animal Head Sculptures

Creative Clay: Sculptural

Best suited for elementary or pre-K students.

Duration: 1 60-minute session + 1 30-minute session

Learning Goal(s): Students will learn basic handbuilding techniques while building animal head sculptures.

Learning Objective(s): Students will: (1) make pinch pots to create unique animal head sculptures, and (2) paint them with glaze to color and decorate their sculptures.

Big Question(s): (1) What is a pinch pot and how do I make one? (2) What features should be included on the sculpture to represent the chosen animal?



Skills/Necessary Demos: Session 1 - making pinch pots, slipping and scoring (scratching and attaching); Session 2 - painting, glazing

Ceramic Terms ([Claymobile Vocabulary Terms](#)):

- Clay
- Ceramics
- Slip and Score (scratch-and-attach)
- Pinch Pot
- Coils
- Plastic
- Glaze
- Bisque Fire (bisqueware)
- Glaze Fire (glazeware)

Other Related Terms:

- **Design** - determining the look and function of an object before it is built or made

Variations/Modifications:

- This project is intended for younger students. Our pinch pot animal sculptures or bobble head project is better suited for older students.

Cultural/Artistic References:

- Article: [Why We're Still Making Pinch Pots](#) by Casey Lesser
- Artist bio: [Dee Oliva](#) who makes mini-animal pots
- [Winterthur Museum's Online Collection](#) - view a variety of Pennsylvania German ceramic animals

Session 1 Materials:

- Clay
- Scoring tool (or fork)
- Needle tool (or skewer)
- Slip (or water)
- Newspaper or scrap paper
- Wareboard (or cardboard)

Session 2 Materials:

- Underglaze*
- Clear glaze *
- Paint brushes

**Colored gloss glaze can be used in lieu of underglaze and clear glaze.*

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Construction Process:
Session 1 (60 minutes)

	ACTIVITY	STEPS	DISCUSSION POINTS
1	Brainstorm	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Talk with students about the different types of animals, monsters, and/or people that they can create for this project. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When possible, share with them some example projects and images that might help them explore the different possibilities with this project. • To help students brainstorm, have them sketch an animal on paper first.
2	Make a ball	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using a piece of clay about the size of a lemon, roll the clay into a ball. 2. Use your finger to smooth out any large cracks in the ball of clay. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For pre-K and some K, it might be helpful to pre-roll their clay into a ball for them.
3	Make a pinch pot	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insert your thumb into the middle of your ball of clay being careful not to push all the way through. 2. Then, using 2 fingers on the outside of the ball, pinch around the ball of clay starting at the bottom and moving towards the top edge. 3. If the clay is really wet, it may be helpful to stuff a ball of newspaper under the pinch pot to help it keep the dome shape while students are decorating. You can remove the paper before firing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For pre-K, it might be helpful to do step 1 for them. Then, they can start at step 2 of just pinching the clay. • To help students visualize the pinching motion, have them shape their hand into a “quacking duck” with their thumb and 2 fingers. Then, they can “quack” around their pinch pot to mimic the pinching motion.
4	Decorate the animal head	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turn your pinch pot upside down with the opening towards the table or wareboard. 2. Use a second piece of clay to make different features on the animal head. Students can make legs, ears, eyes, hair, etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roll coils for legs and tails. • Make a mini-slab and use a skewer to cut out ears and other small details. • Roll small balls of clay for eyes, etc. 3. Use the scoring tool to slip and score each piece of clay onto the pinch pot. 4. Smooth out any rough or cracked pieces of clay on the animal head. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For younger students, we typically use the phrase “scratch-and-attach” to help students remember the process of slipping and scoring pieces of clay together. • Rough pieces of clay will fire hard and become sharp spots on the sculptures. Be sure to smooth anything that might become jagged after firing.

Collect all projects and fire them in the kiln.

Construction Process:
Optional Session 2 (30 minutes)

	ACTIVITY	STEPS	DISCUSSION POINTS
1	Underglaze	1. Paint bisqued pieces with underglaze. We recommend a few coats to make the color more opaque.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Modification/Variation: Student can paint with colored gloss glazes rather than underglaze and clear glaze.</i>
2	Clear glaze	2. Once underglaze is dry, coat with clear glaze. Be sure to leave the bottoms of the pieces clean.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is glaze on the bottom of the piece, it will fuse to the kiln shelf during firing. Sponge bottoms of pieces to ensure no glaze remains.
Collect all projects and fire them in the kiln.			

National Core Art Standards:	Pennsylvania Standards for the Arts and Humanities:
<p>Creating - Conceiving and developing new artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #1. Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #2. Organize and develop artistic ideas and work. Anchor Standard #3. Refine and complete artistic work.</p> <p>Presenting - Interpreting and sharing artistic work Anchor Standard #4. Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #5. Develop and refine artistic work for presentation. Anchor Standard #6. Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.</p>	<p>9.1. Production, Performance and Exhibition of Dance, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts A. Know and use the elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts and humanities. B. Recognize, know, use, and demonstrate a variety of appropriate arts elements and principles to produce, review and revise original works in the arts. C. Know and use fundamental vocabulary within each of the arts forms. J. Apply traditional and contemporary technologies for producing, performing, and exhibiting works in the arts or the works of others.</p> <p>9.2. Historical and Cultural Contexts A. Explain the historical, cultural and social context of an individual work in the arts. D. Analyze a work of art from its historical and cultural perspective. G. Relate works in the arts to geographic regions.</p>

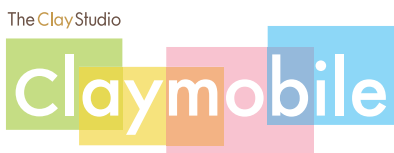


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