

Identity Hands

A Social and Emotional Learning project for Self-Awareness



Identity Hands projects provide a direct and authentic connection to the [Self-Awareness competency of Social and Emotional Learning](#). Through choosing and creating symbolic representations of their own identities to add to their hand sculptures, students will be working on Integrating personal and social identities and identifying personal, cultural, and linguistic assets.

This lesson is suitable for Kindergarten - 12th grade and can be adapted for pre-K students ages 4 & 5.

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Identity Hands Creative Clay: Sculptural

Duration: 1 90-minute session with an optional 30-minute session

Learning Goal(s): Students will create a ceramic hand project that represents their identity

Learning Objective(s): Students will demonstrate slab building techniques, properly scratch and attach, and create a finished product that represents their identity

Big Question(s): What do you want people to know about you? How can you express who you are artistically? What does identity mean to you?

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



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

- Clay
- Ceramics
- Slip and Score (scratch-and-attach)
- Underglaze
- Glaze
- Bisque Fire (bisqueware)
- Glaze Fire (glazeware)

Other Related Terms:

- Slab- a portion of clay that has been flattened into a sheet
- Identity- the fact of being who or what a person or thing is

Warm-Up: Facilitators can share messages about their own identities and list things that represent them that they would like to add onto their hands. Students will make a short list of items and symbols that represent their interests, culture, or other important things about them. They can start by drawing a picture of the way they would like their hand projects to look.

Variations/Modifications:

- Without access to a kiln, you can make this project with air dry clay. Use acrylic paint instead of underglaze to decorate, no firing required!
- Students can trace their hands in order to create their exact hand shape, or they can freehand draw as well

Cultural/Artistic References:

- The human hand has been at the center of visual art history not just as the main tool of creation, but also as an important focus of representation, revealing the development of artistic skills and cultural trends in key periods. (<http://www.thewestologist.com/arts/hands-in-art>)
- No two identical sets of fingerprints have ever been found, making the human hand an ideal artistic symbol for identity. (<https://study.com/academy/lesson/fingerprint-facts-lesson-for-kids.html>)

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Session 1 Materials:

- Clay
- Scoring tool/Skewers

Session 2 Materials:

- Underglaze
- Clear glaze
- Paint brushes

Construction Process:
Session 1 (90 minutes)

	ACTIVITY	STEPS	DISCUSSION POINTS
1	Make the base	1. Form a slab from a piece of clay.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slabs should be about 1/3 inch thick, no thinner than a finger. (Instruct children on how to measure width in comparison with their finger.)
2	Trace Hand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Find an appropriate spot to put your hand on the slab, where you have enough space to trace each finger 2. Trace your hand shape out of a slab 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If students make a mistake while tracing, they can use their finger to smooth out the clay that was cut, and can start again. Discuss how clay is forgiving and mistakes can be “erased” when the material is still wet and malleable.
3	Smooth out Edges	1. Once you have your hand shape cut out of clay, you will use your fingers to smooth out the entire edge of the hand	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp lines or extra clay that is stuck to the edge of the hand will become sharp during hardening and firing. Discuss how taking extra time to smooth out edges now will make a better finished piece after it is fired and permanent.
4	Attach identity pieces	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The extra clay leftover from cutting out the hands can be used to make the identity parts of the project 2. Scratch and attach each time you want to add on a feature to the hand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will determine what types of shapes to add to their hands that describe them (ie sports, hobbies, toys, games pieces, movies, etc.) • Use the scoring tool or skewer to scratch on the feature and on the hand where you want to attach it on • Add water to both scratch marks • Attach and smooth

Collect all projects and fire them in the kiln.

Finishing Process:
Optional Session 2 (30 minutes)

	ACTIVITY	STEPS	DISCUSSION POINTS
1	Underglaze	1. Paint bisqued or leather hard pieces with underglaze.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Modification/Variation: Student can paint with colored gloss glazes rather than underglaze and clear glaze.
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 Arts Standards

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.

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.

Responding - Understanding and evaluating how arts convey meaning

Anchor Standard #8. Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work

Connecting - Relating artistic ideas and work with meaning and external context

Anchor Standard #10. Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard #11. Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.



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