

Grade: Beginning Pottery	Lesson: Pinch Pot
Form: Clay	Theme: Pinching Practice

Big Idea:

Learning how to create a pot using the pinch method.

Key Concepts:

- The pinch method is used to make many different kinds of pottery.
- The pinch pot can be functional or sculptural depending on what you are going for.

Essential Questions:

- What is a pinch pot?
- What are the different ways to make a pot using the pinch method?
- What makes a successful pinch pot?

Rationale (Why):

Pinch Pots are created by using your hands to shape the clay. They can vary from small bowls to very large vessels by pinching the clay. Pinch pots are some of the oldest archeological artifacts found on the planet. Many civilizations used pinch pots for functional use, even today. The goal of this unit is to introduce students to building techniques in ceramics. Students will become familiar with basic hand building techniques in clay. Students will know how to use basic ceramic tools to create designs. They will think about the sculptural form, texture/s, color/s, function/s, place of display, etc. of the finished piece.

Narrative (Story):

Students will learn the proper techniques of a successful pinch pot. They will learn and practice the process of slip joining as well as wedging. Students will need to demonstrate 2 formative tests before they form their final pinch pot. They will cut a pinch pot in half to view the consistency of their pinching. The second test is to float their pot in a bucket of water to test for lightweight quality / disbursement of volume and symmetry of pinch. Student may do these tests until they feel confident to create a high quality pinch construction. They will finally construct and design a successful pinch pot that is personal to them.

Core Abilities:

The learners will

- CA5: Understand and apply processes, media (art materials), and techniques.
- CA7: Reflect upon and assess the characteristics and qualities of their work and the work of others.

Objectives (Align with Standards and Assessments):

The learners will

- Evaluate the success of their work at accomplishing its purpose. (Core ability 7)
- Demonstrate knowledge of the various purposes the pinch pot can serve in society.
- Use quality pinch construction techniques with confidence while creating a pinch pot. (Core Ability 5)

- Create a pinch pot relating their own ideas using the pinch technique. (Core Ability 5)

Activities and Instructional Procedures needed for each (Are Key Concepts a part of Instruction, Discussions, and Motivation):

Activity 1: Wedging demo:

Students will watch the teacher demonstrate how to properly wedge clay. They will then take time to practice wedging as teacher observes and helps when needed.

Activity 2: Pinch technique demo:

PROCESS

Make a Pinch Pot!

Here are some instructions for making a simple, handbuilt bowl. A bowl made this way is called a pinch pot, because of the way the clay is squeezed between the thumb and fingers to form the walls.

Start with a ball of clay about the size of a fist.

The first step to making your pinch pot is to start the opening. Cradle the ball of clay in one hand and gently press the end of your thumb into the clay. A good method is to press down a bit with your thumb and then give the clay a bit of a turn — press down some more and then give it another little turn. This helps to keep the hole you are making centered and the walls an even thickness. When you sense that you are getting close to the other side of the clay ball, stop before you go through.

Now the fun part begins — forming your pot! The idea is to gently press the clay from the inside with your thumb against your fingers on the outside. Each time you press a bit with your thumb, give the clay a bit of a turn before you press again. It doesn't matter if you turn the pot clockwise or counterclockwise, just work in a way that seems natural to you.

This photo shows the technique from a different angle. If you curve your fingers slightly, you can control the shape a bit better and make a more rounded form. If your fingers are held flat against the outside, the pot rim will flare out more to make an open bowl shape. Experiment to see what kinds of forms you can make. Continue the pinching and turning method until the walls of the pot are thinned out to a thickness that seems about right to you.

With a bit of patience and practice, it is possible to make quite a finely crafted bowl with this simple technique. The main thing to remember while working is to try for an even wall thickness as you pinch your way around the bowl.

If you make two bowls of the same diameter, they can be joined together, rim to rim to make a closed form. To join them take a needle probe and score the rims of the two bowls then add slip to both surfaces before pushing them together for a permanent join. Use your



fingers, modeling tool, and sponge to smooth and blend the clay of the two pots together. The large, egg shaped pot made from the two bowls makes a great body for a hand built animal — use your imagination!

You can create texture on the outside of the pot by pressing objects into the wall or by carving some patterns onto the surface. Once the pinch pot has dried out a little bit, it can be burnished. You can use a smooth stone or the back of an old spoon to rub the surface of the pot. The more you rub the surface, the shinier it will get.

People have been using this same pottery technique for about 20,000 years. We hope that you have some fun trying it out for yourself!



Activity 3: Show different kinds of pinch pots:

Teacher provides PowerPoint presentation that shows other student work of successful pinch pots. After PowerPoint presentation, Students will look at different kinds of pinch pots and discuss what makes certain ones successful and ones that may need more work. We will discuss what makes a good quality pinch pot.

Activity 4: scoring and slipping demo/ Foot demo

Teacher will give a demonstration on how to attach clay together by scoring and slipping. Teacher will also address the different ways to make a foot on a pot as well as how to apply a foot.

Activity 5: Making the pinch pot

Teacher will expect students to demonstrate 2 formative tests before they form their final pinch pot. They will cut a pinch pot in half to view the consistency of their pinching. The second test is to float their pot in a bucket of water to test for lightweight quality / disbursement of volume and symmetry of pinch.

Student may do these tests until they feel confident to create a high quality pinch construction.

Photo Reference/Finished Piece:



Assessment Procedures (Align with Objectives - Consider Content, Form, Process, and Impact Criteria)

Student will do a self-assessment on their pinch pot and turn it in to the teacher for a final assessment.

Pinch pottery practice:

Student Name:		UNIT: Pinch Pottery		
Core Ability 5: Understandi				
9-12 Competencies	(D) Does Not Meet District Standards	(C) Approaches But Does Not Meet District Standards	(B) Meets District Standards	(A) Exceeds District Standards
Competency 5.1: apply processes, media, and techniques with skill, confidence, and sensitivity	complete projects	complete projects reaching minimal level of skill	demonstrate skill acquisition and understanding of assigned objectives	confidently incorporate skills and sensitivity to produce intended outcome
Competency 5.2: conceive and create works of visual art which relate their ideas to the processes, media, and techniques they use	guidance in idea development	develop 1 or 2 ideas with some originality to communicate through assigned processes, media, and techniques	generate several original ideas to communicate through processes, media and techniques with minimal guidance	independently produce many original ideas, and select appropriate processes, media, and techniques to communicate intended idea
Core Ability 7: Reflecting upon a				
9-12 Competencies	(D) Does Not Meet District Standards	(C) Approaches But Does Not Meet District Standards	(B) Meets District Standards	(A) Exceeds District Standards
Competency 7.3: analyze and evaluate various interpretations as a means for understanding works of visual art	recall others interpretations of a piece of art	derive several interpretations of a piece of art	derive several interpretations of a piece of art and describe how individual responses reflect understanding	generalize various interpretations and predict how others will respond to a work of art

Resources:

- 1) <http://douavue.com/courseprojectpdfs/ceramics1/PinchPots.pdf>
- 2) <http://craftdesignsouth.blogspot.com/2010/12/art-of-cup-functional-comfort.html>
- 3) http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pinch_pot

Vocabulary: Pinch, Slip, Score, Wedging, Kneading, Green ware, clay body, needle tool, fettling knife, loop tool, canvas

Modifications: