

Lesson 6: *The Earthen Journey of an Artisan*

(The pottery of Walter Anderson)

Mississippi Visual and Performing Arts Framework Content Strands

Key:

Creating and Performing (CP)

Critical Analysis (CA)

History/Culture (HC)

Aesthetics (A)

Connections (C)

Time Frame: Five 50-minute sessions

Lesson Overview:

In this lesson, students will develop a personal understanding of the characteristic style of Walter Anderson's pottery designs. Students will compare Anderson's work to other pottery designs from across time and culture. After studying these works, students will develop their own style and then design, construct, and decorate a plate.

National Standards:

Standard #1: Understand and be able to apply media, techniques, and processes.

Standard #2: Use knowledge of the structures and functions of art.

Standard #3: Understand the visual arts in relation to history and culture.

Mississippi Visual Arts Framework, Visual Arts High School Level I, Competencies and Objectives:

- 1. Apply proficient skills and craftsmanship in selecting and using various media, techniques, and processes to create original expressive works of art. (CP, CA)**
 - a. Create works of art that communicate original ideas using a variety of media, techniques and processes.
 - d. Practice safety and conservation in the use of tools, materials, and equipment in the creation of works of art.

- 2. Understand how to select and use the elements of art and principles of design applied through various media, techniques, and processes related to the communication of meaning. (CP, A)**
 - a. Integrate visual, spatial, and temporal concepts with subjects, themes, symbols, and ideas to improve communication of intended meaning.

- 3. Understand how media, techniques, and processes create effects that evoke a range of responses. (CP, CA)**
 - b. Analyze artistic intent in own works of art in relation to form, function, and purpose.

- 4. Utilize perceptual skills and apply visual arts vocabulary to make informed judgments while creating and studying works of art. (CA, CP)**
- Effectively use visual arts vocabulary when critiquing their own works or those of others through the processes of speaking or writing.
 - Use appropriate visual art vocabulary related to technique and media as works of art are created.
 - Utilize the visual and organizational components of art and design while creating works of art.
- 5. Understand that a wide range of critical analysis theories exist and provide valid methods for studying works of art. (CA, CP)**
- Examine their own work or that of others to determine the intentions of the artist.
 - Identify different ways the visual arts provide unique modes for expressing ideas, actions, and emotions.

Intelligences Addressed: Bodily/kinesthetic, visual/spatial, verbal/linguistic

Essential Question: Can functional pottery convey meaning and expression?

Strategies: Hands-on activity
Brainstorming/discussion
Comparing/contrasting

Art Concept: A radial design rotates from a central focal point and moves around in a circular or spiral movement.

Previous Art Concepts: Movement, rhythm, patterned motifs, relief sculpture

Instructional Objectives:

- To understand that Walter Anderson, like other pottery designers, enhances the surface of his pottery with designs that are balanced, and have variety, color, and movement.
The learner will . . .
 - Identify and analyze the designs found on the plate pottery of Walter Anderson.
 - Compare and contrast the Anderson pottery designs to those from other artists and cultures.
 - Critique the balance, variety, movement, and color in all of the pottery designs observed.
- To create a ceramic plate from clay, carve a design in low relief, and paint the completed plate.
The learner will . . .
 - Observe the slab construction technique and form a hand built plate by draping clay over a surface used as a mold.

Create a plate design on paper, incorporating a radial pattern using an animal theme.

Carve, in low relief, a plate design into the leather hard form of the slab plate.

Paint the design on the bisque fired plate with glazes. (**Note:** Tempera paint and spray varnish can substitute for glazes but plates can only be used for decoration.)

Vocabulary:

Bisque - The name given to clay pieces fired the first time without any glazes.

Body - The middle section of a vessel.

Clay - An earthy material that is plastic when moist but hard when fired. It is composed mainly of fine particles of hydrous aluminum silicates and other minerals and is used for pottery, brick, or tile.

Fire - To bake clay in an oven (kiln) until it has vitrified (clay particles fused together).

Foot - The base of a vessel that helps it stand upright or level.

Glaze - A vitreous or glassy coating applied to seal and decorate clay surfaces. Glaze can be opaque or transparent.

Kiln - The oven in which pottery or ceramic ware is fired (baked).

Knead (Wedge) - A method of compressing the clay to remove any inner air by rocking and pushing the clay in a rolling motion, usually on a wedging board, compressing the air from the clay. If air pockets are not removed, the clay body may explode upon kiln firing. Canvas or burlap provides an absorbant surface on which to knead or wedge the clay in absence of a wedging board.

Leather hard - A stage of clay that is too dry to shape but can be carved into to create patterns.

Relief sculpture - A work in which the design is raised from a flat surface giving a three-dimensional effect.

Score - Scratching or roughing the surface of clay pieces prior to applying slip in order to fuse them together.

Slip - A liquid substance of clay and water used to fuse clay pieces together.

Rim - The top edge of a vessel.

Materials/Resources:

Journals	Paper clips for carving
Drawing Paper	Brushes for glazes
Pencils, erasers	Plastic grocery bags
Clay, 1 lb. per student	Gallon zip-lock bags
Glazes or tempera & spray varnish	Paper towels

Anderson, W. (1996). *A Symphony of Animals*. Jackson: University Press of Mississippi.

Examples of pottery works from various times and cultures.

Preparation:

1. Prepare transparencies or packets of model examples of works of clay.
2. Cut paper into 12" x 12".
3. Measure out clay, 1 lb. per student and place in zip lock bags.
4. Gather carving tools (paper clips, sharpened wooden dowels.)
5. Collect largest size styrofoam or heavy duty paper plates for molds.

Session One

Instructional Plan:**Motivation:**

The teacher will . . .

1. Introduce the lesson by displaying Transparency # 15, one of Walter Anderson's pottery plate designs. Write questions on the board.
 - What do you see in this artwork?
 - Describe the subject matter.
 - Where is the pattern in this design?
 - What media did the artist use to create this artwork?
2. Discuss student responses. Compare and contrast other examples of Anderson's pottery and that of other artists.
3. Find examples of the seven motifs, pattern, and movement in the designs.

Activity:

The student will . . .

1. Respond to the questions on the board in journal entries.
2. Record examples of the seven motifs used in Anderson's pottery.
3. Discuss Anderson's pottery by comparing and contrasting his work to that of other artists from different times and cultures.

Assessment:

1. Journal entries
2. Class discussion

Session Two

Instructional Plan:

Motivation:

The teacher will . . .

1. Discuss radial design and show the plate designs of Walter Anderson using Transparency # 15 from Session One.
2. Demonstrate folding the 12" paper into fourths so that the sections radiate from the center. Fold again into eighths for a smaller design. The corners can be rounded off.
3. Create a design using an animal and patterned motifs in one section. Repeat the design in the remaining sections. These can be traced from the original drawing in the first section. This will be the pattern for the plate designs later on.

Activity:

The student will . . .

1. Fold the 12" square into sections as shown creating a radial pattern.
2. Create a design on one section using an animal and patterned motifs.
3. Repeat the design in all sections creating a radial design.

Assessment:

1. Teacher observation
2. Rubric for creating a radial design

Session Three

Instructional Plan:

Motivation:

The teacher will . . .

1. Show examples of clay plates created by artisans.
2. Discuss wheel thrown techniques and how symmetrical forms are created.
3. Discuss clay preparation techniques, if necessary.
4. Discuss slab construction techniques.
5. Demonstrate how to roll even slabs from clay. Show how to drape the slab over the mold and shape it to the form of the mold.
6. Demonstrate how to trim and smooth the edges.

Activity:

The student will . . .

1. Observe the demonstration of clay preparation.
2. Observe the demonstration of slab construction.
3. Roll out a clay slab and drape over the mold.

4. Trim the edges of the plate and smooth down. A small amount of water can be used to get a smooth edge. Be careful not to press the clay flat on the edges.
5. Loosely drape a plastic bag over the clay and put in a safe area. Clay should be leather hard before carving the design.

Assessment:

Teacher observation

Session Four

Instructional Plan:

Motivation:

The teacher will . . .

1. Show examples of pottery with relief images carved on the surface, Transparency # 6.
2. Discuss the use of contour line to define the forms and shapes carved into the surface.
3. Demonstrate how to transfer the design from a paper sketch to the clay surface.
4. Demonstrate how to carve the design into the clay surface.

Activity:

The student will . . .

1. Observe the demonstration of design transfer and carving.
2. Transfer designs to the clay plate.
3. Carve the design into the surface of the clay.

Assessment:

Teacher observation

Checklist of molding and carving techniques

Session Five

Instructional Plan:

Motivation:

The teacher will . . .

1. Show examples of Walter Anderson's painted plate designs, Transparencies # 14 and 15.
2. Discuss Anderson's use of color intensity and value to enhance the image.

3. Demonstrate the application of glaze or paint using opaque and transparent colors.
4. Demonstrate safety techniques for using glazes.

Activity:

The student will . . .

1. Observe the demonstration of painting techniques and safety measures.
2. Paint plate designs with glazes or tempera paint.
3. Use repetition of color to create balance and unity in the design.
4. Fire glazed pieces or apply a coat of spray varnish to painted pieces to complete.

Assessment:

Class critique of finished plates

Rubric of lesson objectives

Journal writing

Extensions:

1. Create other pottery forms, such as bowls or vases, and carve designs on the outside surfaces.
2. Create clay tiles in the style of Anderson's alphabet blocks.

Adaptations:

1. Special needs students: Create radial designs on paper plates and paint with tempera or color with markers. Students can also create a glue line relief design on a paper plate and paint it when it is dry.
2. Gifted students: Research the history of pottery from ancient cultures showing a timeline. Compare similarities found from different cultures and times.

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