



The sun face is an excellent introduction to clay sculpture. The history of the sun face transcends all cultures and provides an excellent opportunity for the student to research various cultural and artistic interpretations of the subject. It is the ideal subject to begin the study of facial anatomy. Sculpting the sun face utilizes all three sculpting techniques, additive, subtractive, and manipulative. It allows the individual to express themselves and develop their own unique ideas through the creative process.

The sun face lesson is appropriate for all age groups.

This Lesson Plan is designed for Lesson 5 and Lesson 6 of the MIDDLE SCHOOL LESSON PLANS, Submitted by Betti Longinotti, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools, **Lesson Title:** Exploring Pottery of North Carolina, **Grade Level or Course:** Grade Eight. <http://www.dpi.state.nc.us/curriculum/artsed/resources/handbook/visualarts/17pottery>

# Exploring Hand-building Clay Sculpture: The Sun Face

## Objective:

Students will create a three-dimensional sculpture using hand-building techniques with clay, with expectation relevant to the student artist's level and capability.

More advanced students can use this technique. On three-dimensional forms that are wheel-thrown or slab built.

## Grade Level or Course:

This lesson can be used with middle school and high school students.

## Targeted Goals and Objectives from the 2000 North Carolina Arts Education Standard Course of Study and Grade Level Competencies, K-12:

- 1.06 - Develop solutions that incorporate the use of a variety of senses.
- 2.02 - Apply materials such that their unique properties and potential impact the artistic solution.
- 2.03 - Apply a variety of techniques and processes when working with each material.
- 3.02 - Develop original solutions that effectively

apply the elements of art in an aesthetic composition.  
4.02 Develop the use of life surroundings and personal experiences to express ideas and feelings visually.  
6.01 Evaluate the effectiveness of a work of art in meeting its intended purpose.  
6.02 - Evaluate the ways in which a work of art reflects or communicates the diverse experiences of the artist.

## Lesson time: 90 minutes per class/group

Students will be introduced to hands on exploration in clay sculpture. Teacher will demonstrate hand-building techniques to build a 3-dimensional sun face wall-hanging.

## Background Preparation:

This lesson is designed for middle school students but can be used with high school students.

1. Provide students with books, catalog images, old calendars, etc. for students to use to research suns and develop ideas. Internet research of sun face

images will provide a many examples.

2. Students can copy/paste favorite images for ideas.
3. Review basic clay and hand-building terminology.

## Glossary:

**Ceramic** - essentially the same as clay. Ceramics are materials that are made by heating minerals containing silica to temperatures high enough to melt the materials into a vitreous (glass-like) material.

**Ceramist** - an artist who works in the medium of ceramics.

**Kiln** - an oven (or furnace) that heats to a very high temperature. Clay is placed in a kiln for firing. Any structure used to heat clay to make it hard and permanent is called a kiln.

**Fire** - to heat the clay to a temperature that makes the clay permanent.

**Slip** - Wet clay that is like a thin paste. It is used to attach two pieces of clay in much the same way that paste is used on paper.

**Score** - to cut or scratch a series of lines into a clay surface before putting slip on it. The small cut lines help the wet slip soak into the drier clay.

**Glaze** - Glass coating that makes the clay waterproof. Glazes are made by combining the powdered chemicals necessary to make glass with enough water to make it act like paint. The glaze can then be painted on the surface of a pot or sculpture. Glaze is usually applied to bisqueware.

The terms leather-hard, greenware, bisqueware and mature clay are terms used to describe the various stages clay goes through as it is being worked into a finished object.

**Leather-hard** - clay that has dried enough to be stiff but still contains some water. It's the stage of dryness at

which clay may be polished (burnished).

**Greenware** - clay that is completely dry and is ready to be fired in the kiln.

**Bisqueware** - clay that has been through the first firing in the kiln. It has not been fired to its maturing temperature but it has been made permanent. Bisqueware is very fragile and porous.

**Earthenware** - One of the three basic types of clay can be found in several colors from dark browns to white. Earthenware clays have a low maturing temperature because of their many chemical impurities. A common impurity found in earthenware is iron, which gives many of these clays a warm, red-brown color. Earthenware is not as strong as stoneware or porcelain and is very porous even after firing.

## Supplies

Fabric on which to work (old sheets)  
Newspaper to protect tables and/or desks

Assorted resource material of photographs/drawings of sun faces  
Low-fire earthenware clay  
Kiln  
04-06 Cones  
Hand-building tools:  
Rolling pin, 1/2 inch quarter-round molding, 8 inch 1/2-inch dowel rods, plastic forks, wire tool,  
Painting supplies:  
Acrylic paint, large bowls, milk jugs for washes, brushes, sponges, containers with water for paint brushes  
Plastic for wrapping clay

**Note:** Painting sculpture can be demonstrated but student's sculpture will have to be fired first. If teachers choose to glaze sculpture instead of painting it, glazing techniques can be explored.