

Handicrafts

SAMPLE





About the Course

We follow Mason's model and do clay modeling every year for one term. We are revamping our clay modeling program with a focus on one hand-building technique per year for younger and inexperienced students and more connections across the curriculum in observation and narration assignments. During the second term, students will learn how to do Sashiko work as they did in Japan and Redwork as was done in the United States and Europe. These are hand-stitching techniques that incorporate different stitches to create beautiful patterns. For the 3rd term, students will learn the art of cloisonné, which regained popularity in the West during that time. Cloisonne is an enameling technique that uses metal strips to create delicate designs.

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Term 1: Clay Modeling

"In the modelling lessons, there should be as little of the routine of ordinary lessons as possible, so that it may be regarded as a recreation and a pleasure, and that each child may be free to do the work by the method he likes best, and to realize the delight of exercising his creative power- a feeling which is strong in all children." A Manual of Clay-Modeling by Hermione Unwin, p.2

Students will explore the slab technique to create a variety of projects. The focus is on fostering creativity, observation, and manual dexterity. Teachers are encouraged to adapt lessons to suit students' needs and may choose to follow the videos closely or develop their own approach. Video tutorials are available; younger students and beginners may require adult supervision. It's recommended to establish lesson structure, cleanup, and storage procedures before starting. Teachers should also review the "Teacher Prep" and dry clay reworking tutorials in the master folder. Clay can be purchased as regular terracotta or buff clay, as opposed to air-dry clay; however, pieces must be fired in a kiln to keep.

The overall purpose of the clay modelling lessons is to encourage observation, hand-eye coordination, and manual dexterity, as well as to develop higher-order thinking processes such as the order of beauty, truth, and likeness. Teachers are encouraged to assign clay modeling throughout the curriculum to give students an opportunity to interact with knowledge in different ways. These assignments can be as simple as creating the characters in their literature or history lessons, which will help them to visualize and solidify what they are learning. Mapwork is a great way to incorporate clay modeling into lessons. Also, students could build the structures they are studying in architecture or history. Creating models of tools, weapons, or clothing can also be a great way to interact with lessons.

Term 2: Sashiko & Red Work

Sashiko is a traditional Japanese embroidery technique that uses simple stitches such as the running stitch to create decorative patterns. This technique uses specialized needles and thread that do not have a sheen like embroidery floss does. The designs are traditionally white thread on indigo fabric. It was the poorer class of Japanese that created and made popular this craft during the Edo period, as they used it to patch worn fabrics beautifully. However, the results were so attractive that when sashiko made a resurgence during the Meiji period, the more wealthy class began purchasing these creations and wearing them proudly. Around the same time, red work became fashionable in the United States and throughout Western countries. This is a similar style of embroidery that also uses simple stitches but leans into the outline stitches, such as the back, stem, chain, and split stitch. These stitches are done with red embroidery thread on white or cream fabric. This was a way to beautifully decorate simple, everyday items.

Students should know that various crafts and trends spread throughout the world, while being adapted regionally, due to higher levels of global trading and travel. These crafts go along with the history rotation for the 2026/2027 school year. Students will create a few projects in each craft and be challenged to create beautiful objects to share with others.

Term 3: Cloisonne

Cloisonne is an ancient art form where artists traditionally solder gold or silver wire to a base and fill it with fine ground glass enamel. Students will have an opportunity to practice a variation of this craft by gluing wire to a base and filling the spaces with fine colored sand. Students will start by learning to bend wire and glue it into preferred shapes and lines. They will

progress from there with projects that will increase in difficulty. Younger students will need teacher supervision as the wire can be somewhat difficult to bend and the glue, though non-toxic, needs to be controlled.



Scheduling

GRADE	SCHEDULE INFO.	BOOKS
2-12	Handicrafts 1 time/week 20 min 1 time/week 30 min	The Ultimate Sashiko Sourcebook

Sample Weekly View

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
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			Handicrafts	



Planning & Prep

Permission to print for non-commercial use. See Alveary group use policy to use lessons in a group context.

LINKS: Click text or scan the QR code in the top corner of the lesson plan pages to view online resources associated with the lessons.

Responsibility for previewing all links rests with the teacher. All links were checked at the time of publication; however, websites change frequently and may contain objectionable content. Please report broken links by contacting us through our website.

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To prep for Term 1, have supplies ready. Younger students may need assistance wedging clay, or getting started with their project. A slow and steady pace is encouraged as they complete their projects.

Video tutorials are provided to introduce new concepts as the lessons progress. This will be referred to in the lessons - optionally - can be watched by the teacher ahead of time to familiarize yourself with the goal of the project.

Sashiko & Red Work: Read through the history of both to familiarize yourself with the crafts and pre-read the sites students will see. There are websites linked to the first and sixth lessons. Teachers can share this information "by the way" or allow students to directly interact with the websites. It is helpful to allow students to see images of completed work so that they will have an idea in mind.

Cloisonne: Tutorial videos will be provided for each new lesson introduction. Teachers can watch these videos and teach the students or allow the students to interact directly with the videos. Please preview any websites that are linked before allowing students to access them.

Term Prep & Teacher Tips

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Term 3 (Optional): Visit the Cloisonne kit website below in the Quick Links, and instead of working on the term's projects, students can work at their own pace and choose any beginner kit.



Books & Resources

For book rationales and purchase options, click the Book List link or scan the QR code below.

∞ [View Book List Details](#)

Handicrafts



The Ultimate Sashiko Sourcebook



Supplies

For supply list details and basic supplies helpful to have on hand, click the links or scan the QR code below.

∞ [View Basic Supplies](#)

∞ [View Supply List Details](#)

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Air Dry Modeling Clay



Multi Piece Pottery Tool Kit



Chambray Fabric



Sashiko Thread



Sashiko Needles



Sashiko Pattern Template



Heat Erasable Pens



Embroidery Fabric Squares



Red Cotton Embroidery Thread



Sponge



B-7000 Glue



Precision Tweezers



Pipettes



Household Items - Handicrafts



Mini Plastic Cups



Colorful Sand



Pigment Fixing Glue



1mm Flat Wire



Small Spray Bottle



Bamboo Blank Base Trays



Unfinished Wood Pieces



Wire Cutters



Palette Knife



Pendant Trays



Embroidery Hoop



Silicone Pottery Clay Sculpt Tools



Clear Glaze Aerosol Spray



Quick Links

Handicrafts

- ∞ [Optional Cloisonne Kits \(see Note in Header page\)](#)
- ∞ [Foundations \(See Section 5: Art Appreciation and Instruction\)](#)

Click THIS text or scan the QR code for links.



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How To Teach



Prepare

Look through the term's lessons and tutorials and decide which projects you will try with your students. Projects will last 1-3 weeks. It is always beneficial to teach yourself first before teaching your students. Not only will you be confident in your directions, but you will also have an example the students can see, touch, and refer to often.



Introduce

Show your students examples of completed projects.



Practice

Work through projects with your students, assisting younger children as needed.



Discuss

Let students share any thoughts or connections they have about the lesson.

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Term 1

WEEK 1 ☐ 20m Handicrafts - Lesson 1

Clay Modelling- Creating a Slab Dish

☐ Materials: air dry clay, sponge, water, work surface, table cloth or other surface covering, clay tools, air tight container or plastic bag to store clay projects in from week to week, paper towel or cloth for cleaning hands, surface, and wrapping damp around projects still in progress at the end of lesson time, rolling pin, ruler, spray bottle (for misting clay as you work), Krylon Triple Thick Acrylic Glaze

PREP: Teachers should watch the Teacher Prep tutorial before getting started with the term

∞ Video Link: Teacher Prep for Clay Modelling
Gather all necessary supplies.

→ NOTE

Students will be working from a slab each week which will require rolling out a particular size, shape and thickness. They may need help at first learning how to measure these aspects with a ruler until they get to the preferred size. Projects may need to be wrapped up and finished during afternoon occupations or free time but will depend upon the student.

→ PRACTICE

Watch the tutorial video.

∞ Video Link: Project #1 Slab Dish

- Begin by wedging your clay into a grapefruit sized lump. Beginning with a ball is best when rolling a slab.
- Pick up your clay ball and drop it from a reasonable height onto the table, putting a little force behind it (as you saw in the tutorial). Pick it up, flip it over and do it on the other side. Do this a few times flipping the clay back and forth. This helps the clay to begin to flatten out.
- Check the thickness of your clay at this point. You want it to be between 1.25" and 1.5" thick. If it is not yet there, begin rolling it out evenly as you saw in the tutorial. If it is already there, use your hands to begin shaping it into a square. You can tap it on the table as you saw in the tutorial as well.
- Continue to shape your clay into a 4" square slab that is between 1.25" and 1.5" thick.
- Once you have the correct sized slab, draw a 3" square centered on the slab with a tool or pencil.
- Determine how far down from the surface you will need to go to dig out 3/4". You should place a mark on the side to remind you not to go deeper. Follow what you saw in the tutorial.
- Use your ribbon tool to begin removing the clay inside that 3" square. You only want it to be 3/4" deep.
- Smooth out the inside and the remaining top edge with a silicone or wooden rib.
- Once it is smooth, use a damp -not dripping sponge to smooth again and to remove all of the crumbs of clay(which you will gather and keep).
- Set your project aside to dry.
- After 24-48 hours of drying, take your clay outside to spray with a satin finish. Let it sit for 24 hours, and then you can apply acrylic paint if you desire to add color. You can spray it again after painting. (Spray outside in fresh air and leave outside for several hours to get rid of fumes.)
- At the end of your lesson time, wrap a damp, but not dripping wet, cloth or paper towel around your work in progress and store it in an air-tight container or plastic bag if you did not finish during class time.
- Clean up your work area as your teacher has instructed. Keep your clay crumbs in an old yogurt or cottage cheese cup. Each week, you can mix a little water in, to create slip.

★ TEACHER NOTE

Please make sure you read "About the Course" so you have a better understanding of the purpose of clay modelling and some of the changes we made.



Term 1

How is your modeling going so far? Are you investing effort into your craftsmanship?

WEEK 2 ☐ 20m Handicrafts - Lesson 2

Clay Modelling- Bas Relief

☐ Materials: a coin- nickle, dime, quarter, etc., air dry clay, sponge, water, work surface, table cloth or other surface covering, clay tools, air tight container or plastic bag to store clay projects in from week to week, paper towel or for cleaning hands, surface and wrapping damp around projects still in progress at the end of lesson time, rolling pin, ruler, spray bottle (for misting clay as you work), Krylon Triple Thick Acrylic Glaze

PREP: Cut a slab of clay a little less than the size of a grapefruit for your student to begin with. (Less clay than last lesson.)

Gather all necessary supplies.

→ NOTE

- Students may need something to trace around or to look at for inspiration for today's project. Examples may be, but are not limited to: a tennis racket, a flower, a vase, a fish, a tree, a bicycle, a game console, etc.

- Students will be working from a slab each week, which will require rolling out a particular size, shape, and thickness. They may need help at first learning to measure these aspects with a ruler until they reach the preferred size. Projects may need to be wrapped up and finished during afternoon occupations or free time, but will depend upon the student.

→ PRACTICE

Watch the tutorial video.

∞ Video Link: Bas Relief Tutorial

∞ Link: Bas Relief Examples

- Follow the first four steps from our last lesson to get the proper slab. Your slab only needs to be between 3/4" and 1" thick.
- Look at a quarter, nickel, or dime. Notice how the objects stand out from the surface and yet are smooth. This is what we are aiming for.
- Looking at the object you have chosen to render, either trace or draw it onto the surface of your slab.
- Use a clay tool to slowly and carefully remove the clay around the outside of your object. Determine if you will remove the clay all the way to the edges of your slab or if you will allow for a frame around the edge.
- Do not go more than 1/2" down. Remember, this is a bas relief, and you only want your objects to be less than halfway protruding from the base surface.
- Now that you have removed the clay around the outside of the object, determine what clay needs to be removed to add details to your object. For example, my flower petals reveal layers and depth in my flower.
- When you have finished with your object and are satisfied, use your finger, a tool, or a damp sponge to smooth out the entire slab. Look back at the linked examples and notice how smooth the reliefs are.
- After 24-48 hours of drying, take your clay outside to spray with a satin finish. Let it sit for 24 hours, and then you can apply acrylic paint if you desire to add color. You can spray it again after painting. (Spray outside in fresh air and leave outside for several hours to get rid of fumes.)
- Clean up your work area as your teacher has instructed. Keep your clay crumbs in an old yogurt or cottage cheese cup. Each week, you can mix a little water in to create slip.



Term 1

→ NOTE

At the end of your lesson time, wrap a damp, but not dripping wet, cloth or paper towel around your work in progress and store it in an air tight container or plastic bag if you did not finish during class time.

How is your modeling going so far? Are you investing effort into your craftsmanship?

WEEK 3 ☐ 20m Handicrafts - Lesson 3

Clay Modelling- High Relief

☐ Materials: air dry clay, sponge, water, work surface, table cloth or other surface covering, clay tools, air tight container or plastic bag to store clay projects in from week to week, paper towel or cloth for cleaning hands, surface and wrapping damp around projects still in progress at the end of lesson time, rolling pin, ruler, spray bottle (for misting clay as you work), Krylon Triple Thick Acrylic Glaze

→ NOTE

- Students may need something to trace around or to look at for inspiration for today's project. Examples may be, but are not limited to: a tennis racket, a flower, a vase, a fish, a tree, a bicycle, a game console, etc.

- Students will be working from a slab each week, which will require rolling out a particular size, shape, and thickness. They may need help at first learning to measure these aspects with a ruler until they reach the preferred size. Projects may need to be wrapped up and finished during afternoon occupations or free time, but will depend upon the student.

PREP: Cut a slab of clay grapefruit-sized for your student to begin with. Gather all necessary supplies.

→ PRACTICE

Watch the tutorial video.

∞ Video Link: Project #3 High Relief

∞ Link: The Angel of Death and the Sculptor from the Milmore Memorial

∞ Link: High Relief Example

- Follow the first four steps from our first lesson to get the proper slab. You want a 4" square that is 1.25-1.5" deep.
- Looking at the object you have chosen to render, either trace or draw it onto the surface of your slab.
- Use a clay tool to slowly and carefully remove the clay around the outside of your object. Determine if you will remove the clay all the way to the edges of your slab or if you will allow for a frame around the edge.
- You are creating a high relief this time. Look back at the examples again and notice how far the objects protrude from the surface. Be careful not to push so far that you cut away your object nor go through your slab completely. The object needs to remain anchored to your slab.
- Now that you have removed the clay around the outside of the object, determine what clay needs to be removed to add details on your object.
- When you have finished with your object and are satisfied, use your finger, a tool or a damp sponge to smooth out the entire slab. Look back at the linked examples and notice how smooth the reliefs are.
- After 24-48 hours of drying, take your clay outside to spray with a satin finish. Let it sit for 24 hours and then you can apply acrylic paint if you desire to add color. You can spray it again after painting. (Spray outside in fresh air and leave outside for several hours to get rid of fumes.)
- Clean up your work area as your teacher has instructed. Keep your clay crumbs in an old yogurt or cottage cheese cup. Each week you can mix a little water in to create slip.



Term 1

→ NOTE

At the end of your lesson time, wrap a damp, but not dripping wet, cloth or paper towel around your work in progress and store it in an air-tight container or plastic bag if you did not finish during class time.

How is your modeling going so far? Are you investing effort into your craftsmanship?

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