

Lesson Title: The Empty Bowl Project with Sumi-e
Grade level: Art I/Survey
Time Frame: 10-12 periods, 45 min each

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Goal: To design and create a ceramic bowl that will be used for an Empty Bowl Supper and that incorporates drawings on the clay surface using the sumi-e techniques. To understand the history and purpose of the Empty Bowl fundraiser and the history and techniques of sumi-e painting.

Objectives:

1. Create a ceramic bowl using the drape or slump method.
2. Decorate a ceramic vessel using the sumi-e painting techniques.
3. Be introduced to the four gentlemen brushwork of sumi-e painting.
4. Develop skill in sumi-e painting.
5. Create a ceramic form that is made for a specific function.
6. Understand the importance of social responsibility in a community.
7. Effectively compose the bowl to be interesting from all viewpoints.

Materials: Ceramic clay, underglazes, glaze, forms for bowls(plastic, plaster, paper food “boats”, etc.), sumi-e glazing brushes of varying sizes, table coverings, plastic bags, small boards for project storage, sumi-e drawing paper cut into 6”x9” sheets, 18”x12” newsprint sheets, brushwork guide sheets, water cups, sumi-e ink, stones and brushes.

Vocabulary:

Empty Bowl Project, ceramic, underglaze, glaze, sumi-e, four gentlemen strokes, Zen Buddhism

Procedure:

Part I:

Review chapter 10 in Art In Focus and discuss the various scroll paintings. Look at the work of Soami Kangaku Shinso *Landscape of the Four Seasons*.

1. Look at examples of sumi-e brush work as well as Japanese ceramic artists who use brushwork to decorate their pottery. Soji Hamada, Bernard Leach (English)
2. Study the “four gentlemen” strokes of sumi-e brush painting. Discuss how the philosophy of Zen Buddhism affects the way the artists work and the simplicity of the brushstrokes.
3. Demonstrate the way the inks are ground on the stone and the various opacities of inks. Discuss how they effect the mood or feeling of the strokes and how they create a sense of form and shadow.
4. Practice the four basic types of brushstrokes in sumi-e painting using ink on newsprint paper. Using guide sheets of how to make the strokes, have students practice one type of brushstroke at a time, many times on a piece of newsprint.
5. On 6”x12” sheets of sumi paper, create several samples of designs that might work on the pottery, combining different brushstrokes into an image. Encourage students to keep the images simple, using lots of negative space and minimal detail. Look at samples of the sumi-e painting and discuss the positive and negative space usage, simplicity and minimal quantities of

Part II:

1. Discuss the purpose of the Empty Bowls project and discuss civic responsibility and community involvement. Look at examples of artists who use their work to benefit others. Review the images of ceramic artists using brushwork on their pottery.
2. Begin by completing four or more thumbnail sketches of simple bowl forms. Select some of the designs created in the sumi-e technique and try to integrated them. Select imagery that works with the bowl form. Consider that it is a food bowl and certain imagery may not be pleasant to look at while using the bowl.

3. Choose a form over or into which you will drape a slab of clay. The form should have sides that are angled so that the clay will slide easily out of or off of it. If the mold is made out of a non-porous surface such as plastic or glass it should be covered with a release material such as pantyhose, fabric or spray oil and cornstarch so that the clay will not stick to it. A firm paper form can be used and then just peeled off when the clay is leather hard.
4. Use a piece of clay that will roll out to be slightly larger than the mold you will be forming it to. Roll it to be approximately 1/4" thick for slumping and 5/8" thick for draping. Slumping is draping and forming a slab of clay *into* a mold form. Draping is draping and forming a slab of clay *over* a mold form.
5. Clay that is draped *inside* a form can be left in it until it is nearly leather hard. The inside surface can be worked to a smooth finish in preparation for the brushwork.
6. Clay that is draped *over* a form should be removed before it dries to leather hard as it may crack due to the lack of "give" of the mold surface. The exterior should be smoothed while the clay is on the mold. Remove the bowl carefully to prevent warping the shape.
7. When clay is firm enough to remove from the mold, attachments such as handles, feet, sprigging, coils or other decorations can be made. All attachments should be scored, slipped and welded into place. The bowl should be wrapped at least over night to allow the moisture to even out between attached parts.
8. Demonstrate the use of underglazes for the brushwork on the leatherhard clay. Discuss the similarities with the sumi ink, and the differences. Students can get the same translucencies with the underglazes. The brushwork can be done on leatherhard ware, greenware or bisque, but leatherhard ware allows for easier corrections.
9. Students can decorate the inside as well as the outside of their bowls, though the inside will be flatter and easier to work on. Discourage students from standing their bowls on the rims to paint the sides as they can easily break them.
10. Sign the bowl with your signature or with your stamp. Discuss how many Asian artists sign their work with a "chop" or stamp. Others directly sign with alphabet characters. Also stamp the bottom with the Empty Bowl insignia. Allow it to dry for firing.
11. Complete the bisque fired bowl by clear glazing and firing the surface that will be in contact with food.

Assessment:

When bowls are complete have group critique discussing the successes of the process, most accurate representations of sumi-e and the functionality of the bowls. Have students complete a written assessment of their projects and quiz them over the the historical and process information. Use a project rubric with expectations for the final product.

Resources:

www.ptc.dcs.edu/schools/.../miller/documents/FourGentlemen.ppt.ppt

Brandon Phillips, Seth Cardew, Alice Lasky, Pennard Pottery

YouTube – Sumi-e videos



Name _____ Date due _____ Date turned in _____

Title of Work _____

Assessment Rubric

Criteria	Exceptional 10	Exceeds 9	Meets 8	Attempted 7	Little or No attempt 6-0
Followed directions and meets all the requirements for the assignment.					
Clearly demonstrates skill in the use of clay and the slump/drape technique					
Concept is creative and shows considerable thought					
Work is well crafted in the construction of the bowl.					
Work is well crafted in the glazing.					
Work is well composed and balanced from all viewpoints					
Work demonstrates skill in the sumi-e techniques.					
Work demonstrates understanding of the simplicity and clarity of the Japanese sumi-e painting.					
Successfully created a form that would function to specifically hold soup.					
Effectively contributes to critique and uses vocabulary of art					
Strong effort and meaningful use of class time.					
Total points					/110

Evaluate your work by answering the following questions.

3. What do you feel are the **strongest points** and **why**?

4. What would you change about this piece and why?

5. Write a statement about how you used sumi-e techniques on your bowl and why you chose to use the images you did.

STATE GOAL 25: Know the language of the arts.

A. Understand the sensory elements, organizational principles and expressive qualities of

25.A.4 Analyze and evaluate the effective use of elements, principles and expressive qualities in a composition/performance in dance, drama, music and visual arts

25.A.5 Analyze and evaluate student and professional works for how aesthetic qualities are used to convey intent, expressive ideas and/or meanings.

B. Understand the similarities, distinctions and connections in and among the arts.

25.B.4 Analyze and evaluate similar and distinctive characteristics of works in two or more of the arts that share the same historical period or societal context.

25.B.5 Understand how different art forms combine to create an interdisciplinary work.

STATE GOAL 26: Through creating and performing, understand how works of art are produced.

A. Understand processes, traditional tools and modern technologies used in the arts.

26.A.4 Analyze and evaluate how tools/technologies and processes combine to convey meaning.

26.A.5 Analyze and evaluate how the choice of media, tools, technologies and processes support and influence the communication of ideas.

B. Apply skills and knowledge necessary to create and perform in one or more of the arts.

26.B.4d Demonstrate knowledge and skills that communicate clear and focused ideas based on planning, research and problem solving.

26.B.5 Create and perform a complex work of art using a variety of techniques, technologies and resources and independent decision making.

STATE GOAL 27: Understand the role of the arts in civilizations, past and present.

A. Analyze how the arts function in history, society and everyday life.

27.A.4a Evaluate how consumer trends in the arts affect the types and styles of art products.

27.A.4b Analyze how the arts are used to inform and persuade through traditional and contemporary art forms.

27.A.5 analyze how careers in the arts are expanding based on new technologies and societal changes.

B. Understand how the arts shape and reflect history, society and everyday life.

27.B.4a Analyze and classify the distinguishing characteristics of historical and contemporary art works by style, period and culture.

27.B.4b Understand how the arts change in response to changes in society.

27.B.5 Analyze how the arts shape and reflect ideas, issues or themes in a particular culture or historical period.

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Procedure:

Part I:

Review chapter 10 in Art In Focus and discuss the various scroll paintings.

1. Look at examples of sumi-e brush work as well as Japanese ceramic artists who use brushwork to decorate their pottery.
2. Study the "four gentlemen" strokes of sumi-e brush painting. Discuss how the philosophy of Zen Buddhism affects the way the artists work and the simplicity of the brushstrokes.
3. Learn how the inks are prepared and the various opacities of inks.
4. Practice the four basic types of brushstrokes in sumi-e painting using ink on newsprint paper
5. On 6"x12" sheets of sumi paper, create several samples of designs that might work on the pottery, combining different brushstrokes into an image.

Part II:

1. Discuss the purpose of the Empty Bowls project and discuss civic responsibility and community involvement. Look at examples of artists who use their work to benefit others. Review the images of ceramic artists using brushwork on their pottery.
2. Begin by completing four or more thumbnail sketches of simple bowl forms. Select some of the designs created in the sumi-e technique and try to integrate them.
3. Choose a form over or into which you will drape a slab of clay and prepare it to keep the clay from sticking.
4. Use a piece of clay that will roll out to be slightly larger than the mold you will be forming it to. Roll it to be approximately 1/4" thick for slumping and 5/8" thick for draping. Slumping is draping and forming a slab of clay *into* a mold form. Draping is draping and forming a slab of clay *over* a mold form.
5. Clay that is draped *inside* a form can be left in it until it is nearly leather hard. The inside surface can be worked to a smooth finish in preparation for the brushwork.
6. Clay that is draped *over* a form should be removed before it dries to leather hard as it may crack due to the lack of "give" of the mold surface. The exterior should be smoothed while the clay is on the mold. Remove the bowl carefully to prevent warping the shape.
7. When clay is firm enough to remove from the mold and add any attachments. The bowl should be wrapped at least over night to allow the moisture to even out between attached parts.
8. Learn how to use underglazes for the brushwork on the leatherhard clay. Discuss the similarities with the sumi ink, and the differences.
9. Decorating the inside of the bowl is the easiest, but the outside can be decorated too. Avoid standing the bowl on edge because the rim can easily break.
10. Sign the bowl with your signature or with your stamp. Also stamp the bottom with the Empty Bowl insignia. Allow it to dry for firing.
11. Complete the bisque fired bowl by clear glazing and firing the surface that will be in contact with food.

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