

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR ART ACTIVITIES

Head of Gudea, ruler of Lagash, c. 2100 BCE

Concept: Make an idealized image

Materials: drawing paper, pencils

Lesson Outline:

- Discuss the meaning of “ideal.” What is the difference between an “ideal” and a “real” representation? What would be the reasons for making an “ideal” image, rather than one that is more real?
- Ask students to see how many patterns of lines and shapes they can find in the *Head of Gudea*.
- Have students make a self-portrait as a ruler or royalty. Since the self-portrait is of the head and face only, ask the students to think about how they will communicate this information visually. How will they represent their face? What kind of adornments would they wear?
- Observing their own features in a mirror, allow students to practice the “idealized” lines, shapes, and patterns they might use for their self-portrait on a piece of scratch paper. They can borrow ideas from *Gudea*, and also create their own.
- Have students create finished self-portrait on a large piece of drawing paper.

Note: *Art from Scrap (corner Garden and Cota Streets), often sells small mirrors quite inexpensively. If mirrors are not available, the students can sit across from one another in pairs to make idealized portraits of each other.*

Kha'emweset, son of Ramses II, 19th Dynasty, 1279-1213 BCE

Concept: Making an idealized image in a relief sculpture

Materials: air-drying clay, toothpicks, assortment of plastic clay tools or plastic forks and knives

Lesson Outline:

- Prep: cut clay into 3”x3” (or larger) slabs approximately ½” thick, one for each student.
- Have the students observe the use of lines, shapes, and patterns in the sculpture. Are they idealized or realistic? Discuss the definition of a relief sculpture. Point out the fact that *Kha'emweset* has a main figure with a background which is used to bear a message in hieroglyphics.

- Using the image of *Kha'emweset* as reference, have students create a relief sculpture of their own, instructing them to first draw an image onto the slab of clay with a pencil. They can use this sculpture or find another image of an Egyptian pharaoh, queen or high priest.
- Students may then proceed to remove the clay surrounding the image in the background using the flat part of a clay tool. Remind them not to scrape too deeply.
- Have the students experiment with a variety of patterns and textures to create the pharaoh's headdress, collar, and skirt using toothpicks and various tools.
- Add hieroglyphs or other images in the background by drawing in the clay with a toothpick.
- Allow sculptures to harden (1-3 days). If desired, the sculptures may now be painted with tempera or watercolor paints to more closely resemble limestone.

Note: *Paperclay, a great air-drying clay, is sold at Art Essentials and Craft Village. Or call Creative Paperclay Company in Camarillo (805) 484-6648.*

Horus as a Falcon, c. 715-332 BCE

Concepts: Animals as symbols; sculpture in the round

Materials: air-drying clay, toothpicks

Lesson Outline:

- Prep: cut clay into roughly 2"x2" blocks, one for each student, plus an extra piece for the base if needed.
- Discuss the symbolism of *Horus as a Falcon*. How might the symbolism change if the sculpture were of a different bird or animal? Discuss the differences between a sculpture in the round and a sculpture in relief. Compare the three-dimensional sculpture of *Horus* to the relief sculpture of *Kha'emweset* which has a background.
- Discuss the lines and shapes of the sculpture. Are they bold or delicate?
- Have students choose an animal to be the symbol of their own power and strength. Ask them to make a sketch of their animal, using simple, bold lines and shapes.
- Working from their sketches, have students create a sculpture of their animal symbol using air-drying clay. They may use a toothpick to help define details in the lines and shapes. If possible, have the students try to retain the block shape of the clay for the base; otherwise, the animal symbol may be attached to a clay block by inserting pieces of toothpicks or wire into the bottom of legs and into the base.
- Allow the sculptures to harden (1-3 days). If the animal symbol is attached to the clay block with toothpicks or wire, a few drops of glue

may be in order once the sculpture is completely dry. If desired, the sculptures may now be painted with tempera or watercolor paints to more closely resemble bronze.

Athena, Roman 1st C. BCE copy of a 5th C. BCE Greek sculpture

Concept: Reconstruction of image using mixed media collage

Materials: Xeroxed copies of *Athena*, assorted paper, magazine pages, scissors, glue, pencil, markers, oil pastels, etc.

Lesson Outline:

- Prep: xerox copies of the sculpture *Athena*; one for each student (have extras on hand)
- Discuss what students know about Athena and what details are missing from the sculpture. Ask where she might be standing and what might be in her surrounding environment.
- Have the students create a complete image of Athena using a variety of media. The background should be completed first; students may collage scenery and objects they find in magazines and combine them with hand drawn elements. Let their imaginations take over!
- Students may then reconstruct Athena herself, using the Xerox of the sculpture as a proportional guide. Hand drawn elements may be combined with cut-out colored paper and images from magazines.
- Glue all pieces together, and have students place Athena on her collaged background.

Black-Figure Hydria, about 530 BCE

Concept: Art that tells stories

Materials: watercolor paper or Bristol board, orange and black crayons or oil pastels, paper clips

Lesson Outline:

- Prep: pre-cut the watercolor paper or Bristol board to the shape of the hydria (use xerox as template). Bend one end of paperclips to use as scratching tools.
- Discuss how the images on *Black-Figure Hydria* tell a story without using words. What details and gestures can be observed which help to give us information about the scene?
- Have students pick a story from Greek mythology to depict solely through images. Ask them to sketch their ideas on a piece of scratch paper. Point out the decorative border surrounding the figures on the

Black Figure Hydria and ask them to include a border design in their own drawing.

- The students may then completely cover the watercolor paper or Bristol with orange crayon; the denser, the better. Next, have students draw only the outlines of the figures in their story with pencil over the orange crayon.
- Have the students carefully color inside the outlines of their figures with black crayon. If they go outside the lines a little, they can always scratch away excess black. They now can draw in the rest of the figures' details by scratching lines in the black layer with the paper clip tool, revealing the layer of orange underneath.
- Repeat the last step for the border.
- Finished piece may be mounted on black construction paper cut in the shape of a hydria.

Black-Figure Kylix, 540-525 BCE

Concept: Masks, functional art

Materials: sturdy paper soup bowls, small Styrofoam cups, tempera paints, glue

Lesson Outline:

- Discuss masks and their purposes. Why would a drinking cup double as a mask? Discuss the image at the bottom of the cup. What other image could be used at the bottom of a cup, and why?
- Have students place the styrofoam cup in the center of the underside of the bowl and trace its outline for the mouth of the mask. Now they can draw in the eyes and other details. Next, they may draw an image inside the bottom of the bowl.
- Have students paint the image in the bottom of the bowl first. While that is drying, they can paint the Styrofoam cup, which will function as the underfoot of the drinking vessel. Have them paint the inside of the cup first, then turn it upside-down to paint the outside. The bottom of the cup doesn't need to be painted because it will be glued to the bottom of the bowl.
- Now students may paint the underside of the bowl. When it is completely dry, the accompanying cup can be glued onto the center.

Note: *If desired, extra soup bowls can be used to cut out shapes for the handles. These, too, must be painted and glued on when the paint is completely dry.*

Bearded Man, Roman, mid 3rd C. BCE

Concept: What is a realistic image?

Materials: drawing paper, pencils

Lesson Outline:

- Compare the Roman *Bearded Man* to *Gudea, ruler of Lagash*. Using information gathered through careful observation (looking), describe the difference between the “ideal” and the “real.”
- Ask the students to observe the lines, shapes, and patterns used in *Bearded Man*. How do textures differ in the two sculptures?
- Have students draw a realistic self-portrait of their head and face (this time just as themselves, not as rulers or royalty!). Observing their own features in a mirror, have the students focus on some of the irregularities and asymmetries they see. Ask them to exaggerate these irregularities to see what kind of effect it gives to the drawing. Use the same size paper as the idealized drawing and display together for comparison.

Note: Again, if mirrors are not available, students may draw each other. Another option is to provide students with pictures of people’s faces from newspapers or magazines.

A Hint

It helps immensely to try out each of these activities yourself before doing them with the students. You will have a better understanding of the steps involved as well as your own prototype to show them.

HAVE FUN!