

Story Writing & Modeling Clay Figures

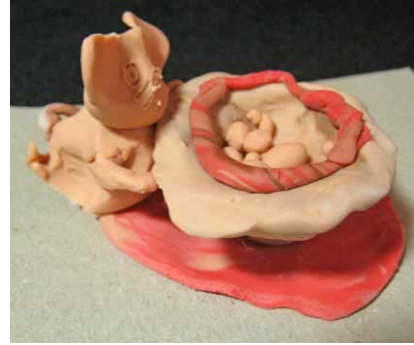
Optional Introduction: Read to the students the Russian Folktale “Clay Boy” by Mirra Ginsburg



Clay Boy



Mouse at Food Bowl by Hope



Target Grade: Fourth Grade

Goal (Terminal Objective): Students will learn how to model figures using modeling clay for a story they write.

Objectives:

1. Students will write a story that includes a main character, a plot, and a setting.
2. Students will create a main character for their story.
3. Students will develop a plot for the story: Who did what, where, when, and why.
4. Students will form the figure/figures in their story using modeling clay.
5. Students will learn that clay animation is used to form motion pictures by manipulating the clay forms from pose to pose, a series of pictures is taken, then run together at a fast pace, frame by frame, to produce an animated film.

National Standards:

Visual Arts Grades K-4 Content Standard #1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

Visual Arts Grades K-4 Content Standard #3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas

Visual Arts Grades K-4 Content Standard #6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines (**Cross-Curriculum Connection** between writing and the visual arts; folklore and the visual arts)

Purpose: Students will write a short story about a character that they create. Students will illustrate their story using watercolor pencils. Students will create a three-dimensional form of their character using modeling clay.

New Vocabulary:

Literary Terms: main character, plot, who, did what, where, when, and why, author, and illustrator, folktale

Art Terms: two-dimensional, three-dimensional, texture, pattern, foreground, middle ground, background, additive process, armature

Materials: heavy drawing paper, pencils, erasers, Sharpie markers, Sargent Paintbrushes, Sargent Watercolor Pencils, Sargent Modeling Clay in assorted colors, clay tools or toothpicks, heavy gauge sculpture wire, cardboard for bases



Brush Set
#56-6010



12-ct. Watercolor Pencils
#22-7204



Modeling Clay
22-40xx

Time: Five fifty-minute classes: two classes to write their stories, one class to draw their illustrations, one class to color and paint their illustrations, and one class to model their clay figures.

Introduction and Motivation (Set): Read to students Clay Boy. Tell students they are going to write and illustrate their own story. Explain to students that the story of clay boy is a Russian folktale that is passed down from generation to generation by parents to their children. Discuss with students the elements of a story. Assist students in writing a story of their own in class.

Instruction:

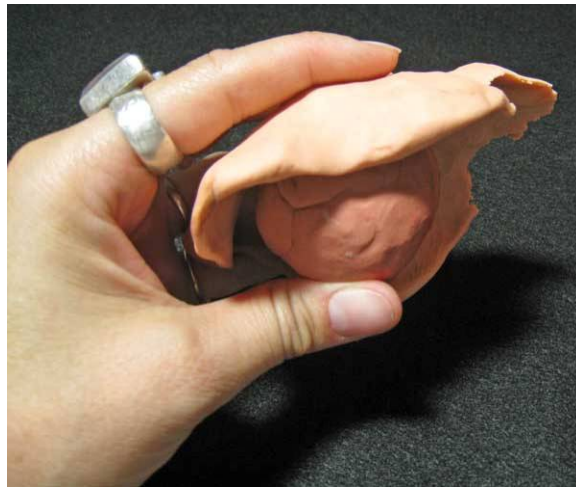
1. Have students draw a picture illustrating one part of their story. Assist students with drawing specific images by drawing them on the front board. This will allow other students to learn to draw images they may also want to draw for their story but don't know how to begin.
2. Demonstrate to students how to color using the watercolor pencils. I suggest having students draw simple shapes like a circle, square, rectangle, and cone. Demonstrate how to layer the pencils on top of one another to produce different values. Explain which colors blend well together: Example: yellow and orange, yellow and green, yellow and

red, blue and red, and blue and yellow. Explain to students that value is the lightness or darkness of a color. If something is red, and you want to produce a shadow on it, then you can add a light layer of blue along the edge, which will produce a darker value on one side. Value helps give form to objects. Demonstrate how to color in one direction, so their colors look neat. Demonstrate how to color along something to give it form – circular coloring of a circle, will help it appear round.

3. Demonstrate to students how to form simple shapes using the modeling clay. Demonstrate how to blend colors together to make them stick together. Demonstrate to students how to use one color of clay to form an armature underneath the color of clay they want to use. For example, there might not be enough of red to make a huge ball, so students can make the ball in another color, flatten out the red clay, and wrap that around the ball, (see photograph). Use your finger to blend one part into another part you are attaching to your sculpture. By adding pieces together, students are using the additive process of sculpture building. Show students how to add texture to their figures by using clay tools to make indentations onto the surface of their clay bodies. If no clay tools are available, and end of a pencil can be used, or toothpicks work well too. Texture can be used to show hair on their figures, or patterns on a character's shirt, and for facial features.



Form simple shapes for body parts.



Use scrap clay as armature balls. Flatten out the color the student wants to use as the main color, and wrap the scrap clay with it. For example, I wanted the peach color for my clay boy's body parts, but I didn't have enough of it. So I used another color as my base armature, flattened out the peach color, and wrapped my ball with it. I did this for the head, trunk, and short forms.



Finished wrapped head form.



The legs were wrapped with a coil before the simple short form was blended onto the leg tops.



The form for the shorts was made using scrap clay, then wrapped with a thin layer of red clay.



The forms are stacked and blended together.



Coils were rolled for the suspenders. Balls were rolled and pushed on for buttons. A clay tool was used to make the indentations for the eyes and mouth. This is what Clay Boy looks like in the illustrations for the "Clay Boy" book read to the students.

Activities:

(1) Guided Practice:

1. Assist students in writing their short stories. You may want to work with their classroom teacher on this as a collaboration assignment between writing in their classroom, while you work strictly on the art part in your classroom.
2. Students will illustrate a part of their story. Students will draw with pencil and include a foreground, middle ground, and background for their illustration. Explain to students how illustrators accomplish this. Objects drawn in the foreground are drawn at or near the bottom of the page, and are larger than objects

drawn in the middle ground of their paper. Objects in the middle ground of their paper are drawn slightly smaller than objects in the foreground, and are placed near the middle part of their paper or above the objects in the foreground of their paper. Objects in the background are drawn the smallest and are drawn behind the middle ground objects on their paper or above the middle ground objects on their paper.

3. Students will use watercolor pencils to color in the drawing they illustrated for their short story. Students will apply water using a paintbrush on top of the areas they colored, which will turn their pigment into paint.

4. Students will use simple shapes to form the character from their story using modeling clay. Students will add texture to their characters, fur, hair, patterns, etc. using clay tools, the end of a pencil, or a toothpick.

(2) Independent Practice and Check for Understanding: Teacher will ask questions to students as they work on their project, review literary terms, art vocabulary. Teacher will facilitate students in drawing illustrations that include a foreground, middle ground, and background. Teacher will assist students in drawing images they don't know how to draw.

(3) Closure: Students can share their stories and illustrations with the rest of the class. Suggestion: Allow students one fifty-minute period to circle around the room, read each other's stories, and view each student's sculpture(s).

Evaluation:

Level One -- Student's story is excellent! The story makes sense and has all the elements of a story. Student has rendered a watercolor pencil painting of one scene from their story. Student has included a foreground, middle ground, and background in their drawing. Student has layered more than one color on top of another to produce different values in their drawing. Student has crafted a model of their main character using modeling clay. Student has used texture to embellish their clay model. The model resembles the character in their drawing and story.

Level Two -- Student's story is very good. Student has rendered a watercolor pencil painting of one scene from their story, but did not include a foreground, middle ground, and background in their drawing. Student has crafted a model of their main character using modeling clay. Student has used texture to embellish their clay model. The model resembles the character in their drawing and story.

Level Three -- Student's story is o.k. One or more of the elements of a story may be absent. Student completed a watercolor pencil drawing of their story, but did not complete the painting part of the assignment. (No water and paintbrush used to go over the watercolor pencil to turn it into paint.) Student has crafted a model of their main character using modeling clay, but it lacks any detail. The model somewhat resembles the character in their drawing and story.

Level Four -- Student's story is poor. Little or no thought went into creating the story. Student completed a pencil drawing of their story, but didn't finish coloring their

drawing. Student crafted a model of their main character using modeling clay, but the figure is poorly formed, lacks detail, and needs improvement.

Tips:

1. Save scrap clay to form base armature balls to be used underneath thin layers of solid colors.
2. If the sculpture is top heavy, a little sculpture armature wire may be inserted into the legs to help give it support and enable the sculpture to stand.
3. Use a piece of cardboard for students to model their sculptures on. Students can blend their bases down onto the cardboard for stability and it will allow them to quickly transport the sculptures to a storage area should an extra class be needed for students to finish their project.

Extension: Students can use small note pads and create flip books to show how cartoon figures are animated.

Resources: Clay Boy by Mirra Ginsburg

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www.sargentart.com 12/050/2008