

“Architecture”: Exploring Architecture through Clay Tiles

OVERVIEW

In this lesson students will learn about San Antonio architecture through clay manipulation.

TIME ALLOTMENT

3-4 45 minute classes

SUBJECT MATTER

This lesson includes instructional goals in Art and Social Studies.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The students will be able to:

- create clay tiles showing San Antonio architecture
- analyze balance and composition in various building structures
- describe the effects of balance and composition on a given structure

STANDARDS

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) (<http://www.state.tx.us/teks>)

Perception	.1A	
Creative Expression/Performance		.2C
Historical Expression/Performance		.3C
Response/Evaluation	.4A	

MEDIA COMPONENTS

VIDEOS

Harding Black: An American Treasure, Alamo Public Telecommunications Council, 1999.

“Creating Tiles” (00:59)

This clip describes a WPA project from 1937 to the 1940’s when Black

taught tile making classes. It shows a sample of the tiles Black created.

MATERIALS

You will need the following to complete these activities:

PER CLASS

- 6” square pieces of white drawing paper
- Pencils
- Precut 6” square pieces of clay approx. ¼” thick
- Toothpicks or other clay drawing tools
- Acrylic paints or tempa paints
- Clear gloss acrylic spray

VOCABULARY

Tile, balance, composition, texture

PREP FOR TEACHERS

Review video clip and prepare materials as stated above.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITY: SETTING THE STAGE

Ask students to think about drawings they have made on paper. Tell them that many people like to design on tiles. Explain that today they will watch a video clip about some tiles that Harding Black created.

Provide a FOCUS FOR MEDIA INTERACTION by having the students

watch for the designs and colors Black used on his tiles. PLAY the clip, “Creating Tiles.” PAUSE the clip when the shot of the Native Texan tiles are shown. Discuss with students that Black painted Native Texan scenes because that was popular during that time. Ask students to take note of the designs Black used.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

DAY 1

1. Tell students they are going to design a clay tile showing the architecture of San Antonio.
2. Show pictures of San Antonio buildings like the Alamo, Tower of Americas, Pearl Brewery, Tower Life, Milam Building, Emily Morgan Motel, Alamo Bank Building and discuss balance and composition of each.
3. Pass out the 6” square drawing paper and pencils. Have students lightly draw 3 buildings. Discuss the balance of designs and how artists usually use an odd number of items in their compositions. If they are having difficulty, students can draw out the three buildings separately and then overlap them to create the look they want.

DAY 2

1. Have 6” square pieces of clay ready for the students. Have them take their design, lay it on the clay and trace over it with a toothpick.
2. Next have the students remove the paper and draw additional details directly onto the clay.

2004 MASTER TEACHER
Karen Krueger

“Architexture”
Grades 3-4

3. Let clay dry and then fire it.
4. When ready have the students paint their tile with acrylic paint or tempera paint. If you do the latter, spray the tiles with clear gloss acrylic in a well ventilated area.

RELATED ARTWORK

Pictures of San Antonio architecture like the Alamo, the Tower of Americas, etc. should be displayed.