

## **Ancient Clay Whistles**

### **Lesson**

**Grade Level: 1**

**Time Required: 240 Minutes (4 one-hour class periods)**

#### **Objectives:**

- I can make a pinch pot.
- I can hand-build a slab.
- I can attach clay by scoring and adding slip.
- I can follow directions.
- I can explain what I am making using "Quack-a-demic Vocabulary." (see "Resources" below)
- I can explain why I am creating this project.
- I can use tools properly.
- I can dispose of clay properly.
- I can work carefully.
- I can make mistakes.
- I can persevere.
- I can try!

#### **Connections:**

- Music-musical instruments
- Language Arts-past vs. present and cultural awareness; speaking and listening skills
- Math-3D shapes
- Social Studies-ancient civilizations
- Science-scientific method of archaeology
- NCCAS (see "Standards" below)

#### **Materials:**

- Canvas table coverings
- Bucket of water for hand washing
- (2) 5oz. lumps of non-toxic terra cotta air-dry clay per student (see "Resources" below)
- Various clay tools for poking, cutting, forming, and scoring
- Sax True Flow Non-Toxic Waterproof Non-Smearing Multi-Media Varnish Gloss (see "Resources" below)
- Various history and reference links below

#### **Vocabulary:**

- clay
- terra cotta
- pinch pot
- slab
- score
- slip
- attach

- smooth
- join
- ancient
- artifact
- archaeologist
- funerary urn
- mesoamerica
- Mexico
- whistle

### Main Activity:

#### Part 1 Background Information and Learning Challenge-

- Show "Solving Mysteries with Archaeologists" [4 min. 36 sec.] (see "Resources" below)
- Show geography of mesoamerica and examples of ancient art in link, "American Art - 5 Mesoamerica: Olmec, Teotihuacan, Veracruz and Zapotec" [12 min. 30 sec.] (see "Resources" below)
- Show additional photos and explanation of "Zapotec Funerary Urns" [4 min. 57 sec.] (see "Resources" below)
- Show additional information on Zapotec people and culture in Oaxaca, Mexico in link, "Exploring Oaxaca Documentary" [11 min. 11 sec.]
- Listen to sounds of flutes and whistles from link, "Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, Master Indigenous Instrument Maker" (see "Resources" below)
- Summarize information on ancient whistles from link and show examples from "Oregon Flute Store" (see "Resources" below) *'This particular whistle and others similar were used by tribes people indigenous to Central America, including Zapotec, Aztecs, and Mayans. It was used to announce the death of a tribal member. The members of the "sacred house" would play this whistle by itself and then later along with a drum, a conch shell, and a flute. It was also used on the "Day of the Dead" with a combination of other instruments. These whistles are hand sculpted from terra cotta clay and fired in a kiln by artist Nashtavewa (Nash). Nashtavewa, the artist: He was born in a Zapotec village named "Ltavehua" located in the jungle forest on the southeast coast of Mexico in the Oaxaca region. His parents are traditional artists specializing in clay whistles, authentic Zapotec cookware and traditional Zapotec ceremonial figures. Now, as a young adult, he is interested in his tribal culture, traditions, ceremonies, and music. He has great appreciation for his heritage and wants to share it with you.'*
- Show teacher made example of whistle modeled after Coquihani, Zapotec God of Light in "Process Board Making Connections" (see "Resources" below)
- Present challenge- "Pretend an archaeologist has just dug up a mysterious whistle made by you without any written explanation. What does your whistle "say" about you? You are going to be like Nash and make an ancient looking whistle out of terra cotta clay. You will form it the way the ancient mesoamerican people might have done. You will then attach a slab to the outside of the whistle that you have designed to represent you. Consider these questions: Who are you? What do you like? When were you alive? Where do you live? Why did you decide to make your whistle the way you did? You will be practicing the following techniques: pinch pot, hand built slab, scoring, adding slip, and joining pieces. Make sure your pieces hold tight by using the proper techniques. Be creative, and have fun!"

#### Part 2 Whistle Construction-

- Pass out first lump of terra cotta clay to each student
- Divide clay in half
- Form 2 pinch pots
- Tap on table gently to flatten edges
- Score both sides
- Apply slip with brush
- Press together gently
- Smooth seam
- Puncture sphere with pencil sized hole (set aside)
- Form short cylinder shaped mouthpiece
- Pierce cylinder with a straw sized hole (set aside)
- Form a finger sized coil half the diameter of the sphere to attach on rim as a "lip" to support mouthpiece
- With mouthpiece aimed at hole in sphere, gently rest bottom of mouthpiece on "lip" at a 45 degree angle
- Blow through mouthpiece to listen for a whistle
- Continue to increase and decrease the angle of the mouthpiece until a whistle is heard
- Once the proper angle has been determined, secure the mouthpiece in place by "hugging" the mouthpiece with "lip" smoothing the "lip" onto the surface of the sphere and mouthpiece
- Gently tap the sphere on the table until the whistle can stand on its own
- Label the bottom with initials and class code

### Part 3 Slab Construction-

- Pass out second lump of terra cotta clay
- Flatten a smooth slab by pressing and turning clay over
- Attach build relief by scoring and adding slip using references of ancient artifacts
- Etch with various tools to enhance relief
- Score the back of slab and surface of whistle
- Add slip
- Gently wrap slab around whistle and attach
- The slab should be well attached and lean against the whistle at approximately 45 degree angle
- Seal with gloss when bone dry, or use hairspray to seal

### Differentiation Strategies:

- English Language Learners will benefit from simplified language, repeated directions, modeling procedures, step by step visuals, and total physical response
- Students on the autism spectrum or with sensory issues may not like the feeling and "messiness" of the clay, and may benefit from the use of Crayola Model Magic in terra cotta (see "Resources" below,) as it does not leave a residue on hands.
- Students with speech difficulties would benefit from directions simplified and broken down into steps, clarification of instruction, and repeated directions
- Students with other impairments might forego the construction of the whistle and score, slip, and join pieces of clay to a slab as an artifact

### Resources:

- American Art - 5 Mesoamerica: Olmec, Teotihuacan, Veracruz and Zapotec- <https://youtu.be/TIN5llxny6M>
- Aussie hairspray- <https://aussie.com/en-us/shop-products/hairspray/instant-freeze-hairspray>
- Crayola Model Magic in terra cotta- [http://shop.crayola.com/modeling-compounds/model-magic/model-magic-4-oz.-white-5744010004.html?gclid=CLWY7ZLL99QCFc62wAod fsHeQ&utm\\_medium=cpc&adpos=1o1&sc\\_intid=5744010004&scid=scplp5744010004&utm\\_source=google](http://shop.crayola.com/modeling-compounds/model-magic/model-magic-4-oz.-white-5744010004.html?gclid=CLWY7ZLL99QCFc62wAod fsHeQ&utm_medium=cpc&adpos=1o1&sc_intid=5744010004&scid=scplp5744010004&utm_source=google)
- Exploring Oaxaca Documentary- [https://youtu.be/4s7\\_g4X9FpQ](https://youtu.be/4s7_g4X9FpQ)
- Every Art, Every Child <http://everyarteverychild.org/resources/tools.html>
- Oregon Flute Store (Zapotec Whistle)-

[http://www.oregonflutestore.com/home/ofs2/page\\_54\\_84/zapotec\\_clay\\_instrument\\_-\\_bentro\\_yelgota\\_-\\_death\\_w.html](http://www.oregonflutestore.com/home/ofs2/page_54_84/zapotec_clay_instrument_-_bentro_yelgota_-_death_w.html)

- Process Board Making Connections- <https://heybonny.wordpress.com/studio/>
- Quack-a-demic Vocabulary Game- <https://heybonny.files.wordpress.com/2017/06/quack-a-demic-vocabulary-game1.pdf>
- Sax True Flow Non-Toxic Waterproof Non-Smearing Multi-Media Varnish Gloss- [https://store.schoolspecialty.com/OA\\_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?minisite=10206&item=508523](https://store.schoolspecialty.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?minisite=10206&item=508523)
- School Specialty link to red terra cotta air dry clay- [https://store.schoolspecialty.com/OA\\_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?minisite=10206&item=505765](https://store.schoolspecialty.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCtpltmDspRte.jsp?minisite=10206&item=505765)
- Solving Mysteries with Archaeologists- <https://youtu.be/zOJlCdMvWAI>
- Studio Habits Rubric The Art of Education <https://www.theartofed.com/content/uploads/2016/01/Studio-Habits-Rubric.pdf>
- Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, Master Indigenous Instrument Maker- <http://www.yxayotl.comhttps://youtu.be/zOJlCdMvWAI/>
- Zapotec Funerary Urn- [https://youtu.be/voeITjKt\\_Qk](https://youtu.be/voeITjKt_Qk)
- Zapotec God of Light, Coquihani- [http://zapoteccivilisation.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/8/5/30855779/7549537\\_orig.jpg](http://zapoteccivilisation.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/8/5/30855779/7549537_orig.jpg)

**Assessment:** (see "Attachments" for "My Art Rubric" below)

## Standards

Use observation and investigation in preparation for making a work of art.

Explore uses of materials and tools to create works of art or design.

Demonstrate safe and proper procedures for using materials, tools, and equipment while making art.

Use art vocabulary to describe choices while creating art.

Understand that people from different places and times have made art for a variety of reasons.

Objects, artifacts, and artworks collected, preserved, or presented either by artists, museums, or other venues communicate meaning and a record of social, cultural, and political experiences resulting in the cultivating of appreciation and understanding.

People develop ideas and understandings of society, culture, and history through their interactions with and analysis of art.

How does art help us understand the lives of people of different times, places, and cultures? How is art used to impact the views of a society? How does art preserve aspects of life?

**Attachments:**

[MyArtRubric.pdf](#)