FREE TEACHING RESOURCE / 9–12 / 48

Ceramic Stories of Place

TEACHER GUIDE • lesson design & facilitation

Grade band: 9–12 | 6–8 sessions, 50–70 minutes

Media: paper armature, cardboard, clean reusable materials, safe fastening tools

The artistic problem

Design a vessel or sculptural tile representing change in a chosen Louisiana landscape.

Essential question: How can clay record a relationship between form, memory, and place?

Place-based cultural lens: Study clay and material traditions while allowing original rather than copied symbolic language.

Learning targets

- Investigate the question: How can clay record a relationship between form, memory, and place?
- Apply pinch/slab construction, texture transfer, relief, form stability in a deliberate original composition.
- Use critique evidence to improve pinch/slab construction and name one next step.

Student-visible success criteria

- The final artwork solves this problem: Design a vessel or sculptural tile representing change in a chosen Louisiana landscape.
- Artwork includes three form studies, a safe construction plan, and tested stability.
- Process evidence shows three different options before selection.
- Visual decisions demonstrate pinch/slab construction and support the intended audience.
- Feedback results in at least one visible revision that the student can explain.

Standards & studio habits

Louisiana 9–12 cluster: VA-CE-H1, VA-CE-H2, VA-CE-H3, VA-CE-H7, VA-AP-H6

Studio Habits of Mind: Understand Art Worlds, Develop Craft, Express, Engage & Persist, Reflect. These habits are developed interactively, not in a fixed rank or sequence.

Instructional alignment: Louisiana benchmark codes are official broad grade-cluster benchmarks; specific expectations are developed locally. The ten instructional stages come from the supplied Artistic Investigations framework.

Preparation & materials

- Drawing paper or sketchbook for idea studies
- paper armature, cardboard, clean reusable materials, safe fastening tools
- Samples and images from reliable sources, with attribution

- Tools appropriate to local safety rules and grade level
- Choice of visual, oral, or written reflection tools

10-stage teaching sequence

01 / Engage Present the artistic question: How can clay record a relationship between form, memory, and place? Give students two contrasting examples that do not dictate a finished product.

02 / Investigate Study clay and material traditions while allowing original rather than copied symbolic language. Gather visual evidence and note what is observed rather than assumed.

03 / Skill Studio Demonstrate pinch/slab construction, texture transfer, relief, form stability. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.

04 / Generate Develop three possibilities for the challenge: Design a vessel or sculptural tile representing change in a chosen Louisiana landscape. Change the focal point, material, arrangement or viewer perspective between drafts.

05 / Plan Compare sketches to the success check (three form studies, a safe construction plan, and tested stability); choose a direction and state why it better communicates the intention.

06 / Produce Produce an original visual response using pinch/slab construction, texture transfer, relief, form stability; conference on one technical choice and one contextual question.

07 / Critique Partners identify where the artwork communicates the intended idea and locate evidence of pinch/slab construction in the work.

08 / Revise Revisit the specific checkpoint: Three form studies, a safe construction plan, and tested stability. Make one visible change after critique and preserve the initial view for comparison.

09 / Present Present with a title, medium, one key artistic decision and any needed credit or contextual limitation.

10 / Reflect Reflect: What evidence proves you improved pinch/slab construction? What will you try or investigate next?

Studio sessions & evidence checkpoints

Session	Teaching move	Capture evidence
Day 1	**Locate the problem** How can clay record a relationship between form, memory, and place?; Study clay and material traditions while allowing original rather than copied symbolic language.	Initial inquiry and positionality check.
Day 2	**Source and context audit** Evaluate evidence, stakeholders, permission or material constraints.	Source log with known/uncertain claims.
Day 3	**Investigate technical options** Demonstrate pinch/slab construction, texture transfer, relief, form stability. Make thinking visible by testing two alternate solutions and identifying what each communicates.	Material trials and design comparison.
Day 4	**Generate + plan** Three robust concepts with intended audience and criteria.	Annotated concepts and rationale.
Day 5–6	**Build and document** Develop work with dated process notes and ethical checks.	Progress photos, source credits, technique notes.
Day 7	**Critique + substantive revision** Test with peers for communication and context; revise pinch/slab construction.	Feedback and before/after comparison.
Day 8	**Present + evaluate** Curate for audience and acknowledge limitations.	Rubric, portfolio record, and next investigation.

Key technique to model

pinch/slab construction, texture transfer, relief, form stability

Access without lowering the artistic goal

Provide paper-clay, air-dry, or cardboard relief pathways where a kiln is unavailable. Offer physical samples, captioned images, accessible demonstrations, flexible planning modes, and alternate materials while retaining the common visual learning target.

Teacher coaching questions

- What is the visual problem you are solving?
- Which decision communicates your intended meaning most clearly?
- What does your reference prove, and what are you still imagining?
- What could a viewer misunderstand?
- What visible revision will strengthen your next version?

Cultural care

Kiln firing requires trained supervision; do not copy culturally restricted ceramic designs.

Stretch & explore

Create a series showing erosion, growth, or continuity through form.

Design provenance: Original Studio Fieldnotes investigation developed for the 50-lesson library; informed by the teacher-supplied ten-stage Artistic Investigations architecture and reflective Studio Habits framework.