



Longwood Center for the Visual Arts
129 North Main Street
Farmville, VA 23901
434-395-2206

Professional Development Teacher Workshop
Fire it Up!
November 8th, 2013

Lesson: *Memory Jars*
Grade Level: Art III and Art IV

What is a Memory Jar or Vessel?

Memory jars are clay, mortar, or putty based vessels that can be adorned and encrusted with found objects that consist of anything from trinkets, personal items, photographs, jewelry, buttons, coins and other items that the artist found to be personally important. Memory jars are a wonderful mix of mosaic and scrapbooking techniques.

It is believed that the tradition of creating memory jars first originated in Africa, and was brought to the United States by slaves. Memory Jars may have originally been used as grave markers. Sometimes painted gold, the items on the jars would have belonged to the person whose grave they marked. The tradition can be traced to European cultures as well when it became popular during the Victorian period of the late 19th century.

Goals	Virginia Standards of Learning
By making a memory jar, the students will demonstrate craftsmanship by sculpting their jars. The students will think about how they add trinkets to their jars to achieve their desired intentions in their pieces.	AIII.3 The student will demonstrate skill, independent thinking, and craftsmanship (artisanship) in the use of media, techniques, and processes to achieve desired intentions in works of art and design.
The students will learn about Folk art and understand the style of this art genre.	AIII.13 The student will compare and analyze relationships between art styles and their related cultures.
By adding trinkets to their memory jars, students will see how the attributes of their pieces evoke responses from other viewers and peers.	AIII.22 The student will analyze how the attributes of works of art and design may evoke viewer response.
The students will look at other memory jars and explain the functions and	AIII.25 The student will explain the functions and purposes of

purposes behind their own personal jars.		personal works of art.
By using trinkets to adorn their memory jars, the students will communicate ideas and themes within their jars.	AIV.6	The student will select subject matter, symbols, images, and media to communicate ideas and themes.
The students will look at examples of memory jars and understand how the cultures of that time reflects the pieces they are viewing.	AIV.10	The student will describe how art and culture reflect and influence each other.
The students will look at examples of memory jars and look at their peers' jars and interpret their meanings. They will attempt to understand import aspects of the pieces/what was important to the artists.	AIV.13	The student will interpret works of art, including personal work, in order to construct meaning.
By examining the examples of memory jars, their own jars, and their peers' jars, students will justify their personal perceptions of these pieces.	AIV.19	The student will justify personal perceptions of an artist's intent, using visual clues and research.

Supplies and Materials:

- Kiln if firing
- Gold paint or gold spray paint
- Paint brushes (if not spray painting)
- Clay tools for carving etc.
- Clay, enough for your entire class to make a memory jar no bigger than 10”H x 8”W x 8”D
- Clay storage so that the pieces can be worked on over several days
- Trinkets – the teacher can purchase some item (buttons, jewels, gems, beads, recyclables etc. and students could provide the rest)
- Small bits of clay for creating trinkets
- Sketchbooks
- Hot glue and glue guns or other adhesive substance of your choice for adhering the trinkets to the jars.

TEACHER AND STUDENT PROCEDURE

TIME	TEACHER PROCEDURE	STUDENT PROCEDURE
MIN		
First Class 15 Minutes	The teacher will introduce memory jars. The teacher will show images of memory	The students will learn about memory jars and take notes.

	jars and discuss the history of these art objects. The teacher will encourage students to take notes.	
20 Minutes	The teacher will explain basic ceramic techniques and show examples. The teacher will explain that they will use the coil building method to create their jars. The teacher will explain how to slip and score and add parts to the jars. The teacher will also discuss how to carve on the jars. The teacher will make sure that students are taking notes.	The students will learn about basic ceramic techniques and understand that they will use the coil building method to create their memory jars. The students will understand how to slip and score to add parts to their jars. They will learn how to carve on their memory jars. Students will take notes.
Remainder of Class	The teacher will have the students make thumbnails sketches and/or work on a sketch of their memory jar.	Students will use their sketchbook to create thumbnail sketches or make a sketch for their desired memory jar.
Second Class 10 Minutes	The teacher will recap on the previous class and go over clay techniques. The teacher will go over rules and guidelines to working with clay in the classroom.	The students will remember what they started working on in the previous class and refresh themselves on clay techniques and rules and guidelines with using clay within the classroom.
Remainder of Class	The teacher will facilitate classroom work time.	The students will continue to work on sketches, or start making final sketches. Some students may begin making their memory jars.
End of Class	The teacher will facilitate classroom clean up procedures.	The students will partake in classroom clean up procedures.
(Optional Homework)	The teacher can assign students to have finished sketches for the next class.	The students will have finished sketches for the next class.
Third Class 10 minutes	The teacher will recap on the previous class and go over clay techniques. The teacher will go over rules and guidelines to working with clay in the classroom.	The students will remember what they started working on in the previous class and refresh themselves on clay techniques and rules and guidelines with using clay within the classroom.
Remainder of Class	The teacher will facilitate classroom work time.	Students will work on making their coil build memory jars.