

Impressive Designs - Imprinting Ceramic Tiles

Grades 4-12

Description:

Ceramic clay can be impressed with many materials to embellish the surface. At Sax, we carry an enormous variety of rubbing plates, stamps, pattern mats and molds that can be pressed into clay for a myriad of effects. This project involves making a ceramic tile decorated with imprinted designs, painted with a faux metallic finish and finally incorporated into a box with the tile as the focal point of the lid. With the supplies listed, success is guaranteed for a wide range of ages. Adaptations on the main plan will become apparent as the fun begins! (Ceramic clay was used for the example but air-dry clay can be used as well. The tile will have to be cut smaller to begin with in order to fit in the box lid as air-dry clay does not shrink as much as fired ceramic clay.)

Objectives:

- Students will use a variety of tools to impress designs into clay.
- Students will use a wide variety of materials to create a box with a ceramic tile decorating the lid.

Materials:

Sax Red Clay, Moist, 50-Lbs. (400237-705)
30" Slab Roller Package (406229-705)
Clay Slabmaking Complete Kit (409782-705)
4-1/4" Tile Cutter (406223-705)
Fettling Knives, Hard Tempered (385145-705)
Clay Shaper Modeling Tools, Set of 5 (245034-705)
School Smart Plastic Water Cups, Set of 12 (085876-705)
Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, Nature II Set of 6 (402255-705)
Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, Cultural Pattern Set of 6 (402257-705)
Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, Design Set of 6 (318123-705)
Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, Architecture Set of 6 (245903-705)
Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, Nature Set of 6 (245905-705)
Shade-Tex Rubbing Plates, Textile Set of 6 (245906-705)
Fiskars Texture Plates Assortment 1, Set of 6 (405690-705)
Fiskars Texture Plates Assortment 2, Set of 6 (405692-705)
Sax Pattern Imprinting Mats, Set of 12 (404865-705)
Inkums Rubber Stamp Kit, Multicultural Collection (401423-705)
Creative Molding Kit, Set of 6 (404286-705)
Tile Setters, 8"L x 6-1/2"W x 3/4"H (433175-705)
Mayco Magic Metallic Paints and Patinas Introductory Kit (406481-705)
Tile Box (406621-705)
Sax True Flow Acrylic Gesso, Quart (245926-705)
Sax True Flow Acrylic Paints, Set of 12 Pints (439304-705)
Zipper Seal Bags, Pkg. of 500, 6-1/2" x 5-7/8" (086774-705)
Weldbond Glue, 8-Oz. (452375-705)
Brushes
Toothbrush (optional)

Directions:

If careful planning is done, most students will be able to imprint their tile in one class period. The tiles should be given a week or so to dry slowly. Students may work on painting their box while the tile dries and is fired. The teacher may wish to have the first four steps done before class.

1. Wedge a large chunk of clay.
2. Set the slab roller to the desired thickness (about 1/4").
3. Roll a large slab of clay from the wedged chunk. (If you do not have a slab roller use a smaller chunk of clay, a rolling pin and the Slab Thickness Strips to roll a slab.)
4. Using the 4-1/4" Tile Cutter, cut as many tiles from the clay as possible and distribute them to the students. Continue the process until everyone has a blank tile and some extra clay to work with.
5. The students should select from the available pattern mats, rubbing plates, stamps and molds to impress a design into their tile.



6. In addition to impressing a design, extra pieces of clay may be used to create borders (as in the example) or other raised areas on the tile. If pieces are added, they should first be rolled to the desired thickness. The shapes the student wishes to use should be cut out with a fettling knife. The shapes should be imprinted with a design on one side. The back side should be scored with the knife. Slip should be created by rubbing a wet toothbrush over the scored back. The area(s) where the extra pieces will be attached should be scored and slipped as well. Put the two scored and slipped surfaces together and press gently but firmly. All seam lines should be smoothed out with the Clay Shapers.
7. The student should engrave their name on the back of their tile.
8. When the tile is complete, it should be placed in a plastic bag marked with the student's name and stored on a flat surface. It is important to dry the tile slowly to prevent warping. How to slow the drying will vary depending on how humid the environment is. For an average amount of humidity, dry the tile in a slightly opened bag for several days, flipping the tile over (to help prevent curling of the edges) and opening the bag a bit more each day or so. Then, remove the tile from the bag and place the bag over the tile. After a couple days drying like that, remove the bag and allow it to become bone-dry.
9. When the tile is bone dry (dusty feeling and no longer cool to the touch), it may be fired. Tile Setters may be used in the kiln.
10. While waiting for the tile to dry and be fired, students may decorate their tile box. They may wish to choose a Mayco Magic Metallic paint that will be used on their tiles so that they can choose colors for their boxes that will enhance the painted tile. The box in the example was gessoed and painted with acrylics.
11. After the tiles are fired, the students should follow the directions provided with the Mayco Magic Metallics to achieve the color and patina they desire.
12. When both the box and tile are completed, Weldbond or another strong glue should be applied to the back of the tile and to the box lid where the tile will sit. The glue should be allowed to become tacky (a few minutes) and the tile should be inserted into the box lid and left to dry at least overnight.

National Standards:

Content Standard #1: Applying media, techniques and processes.

Grades 5-8: Students select media techniques and processes; analyze what makes them effective or not effective in communicating ideas; and reflect upon the effectiveness of their choices.

Grades 9-12: Students create works of art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques and processes they use.

Content Standard #2: Using knowledge of structures and functions.

Grades 5-8: Students will select and use the qualities of structures and functions of art to improve communication of their ideas.

Grades 9-12: Students will create artworks that use organizational principles and functions to solve specific visual arts problems.