

TCA Activity

Objectives

1. Students compare artworks based on usefulness and visual interest.
2. Students identify uses from which some contemporary ceramics artworks get their basic shapes.

Preparation

Make arrangements for field trip to the TCA. Before your visit, discuss with assigned TCA docent, if possible. Provide the docent with a copy of “Exploring Clay Arts at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheet in advance of your trip and discuss the extent to which students might complete any or all of the worksheet at the center or whether any or all of the questions might be addressed during their tour.

Activities

Distribute “Exploring Clay Arts at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheets to students and ask them to answer as many questions as they can during their tour. If writing responses on the worksheet is not practical or possible during the tour, use the worksheet to guide students in focused observation as circumstances permit. For example, you might use questions on the worksheet when students assemble or travel to the TCA or when they assemble for or travel back to school.

Take notes on any new information presented by the docent as well as interesting questions, observations or responses made by your students during their tour. If the circumstances of the visit do not allow students to complete their worksheets, explain that later, in class, you will lead a discussion of discoveries they made about how ceramics can be beautiful and sometimes both beautiful and useful.

If a visit to the TCA is not possible, display the Selected Artworks from the “Preview the NCECA Exhibition” PowerPoint to get a sense of the great variety of clay artwork.

Optional Follow-Up Activity

Select two or three artworks from the presentation ranging from not at all functional to very or somewhat functional.

Ask students to compare specific artworks they examined up close at the NCECA exhibition at the TCA with the artworks you selected from the presentation. Ask students to compare features that make the artworks visually interesting. Also ask students to compare the relative usefulness of the artworks.