



Baker's Clay Jars

Materials Needed:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour (Do not use self-rising flour as it causes sculptures to expand out of shape)
- 1 cup salt
- 1 cup liquid color. Mix water with various colors of water-based paint (acrylics, tempera, watercolor) to make 1 cup
- glass jars with metal lids (lids should be no less than 2" in diameter)
- measuring cup mixing bowl toothpicks garlic press (optional for fur, hair)

Problems to be Solved:

1. To understand how to create artwork in THREE-DIMENSIONS, that is, sculpture with length, width and depth
2. To break away from the planar arrangement of flat shapes
3. To demonstrate good craftsmanship in basic construction and interesting details
4. To create a work that is pleasing from a variety of views
5. To create artworks that appeal to a commercial market.
6. To consider open forms, mass and volume as a crucial part of three-dimensional sculpture

Suggested Procedure:

1. Begin making the basic Baker's Clay recipe. Combine all-purpose flour and salt in a large flat-bottomed bowl.
2. For each batch of colored clay, do the following:
 - A. Add water to colored paint, enough to make a 1 cup of strong color.
 - B. Add color mixture to salt and flour. Mix well with a spoon or your hands.
 - C. Knead dough 7 to 10 minutes until dough is smooth, yet firm and there are no granules of salt left. (Hint: Salt will dissolve easier if you use warm water).
 - D. Form dough into a ball and place it in a Ziplock bag or plastic wrap to keep it from drying out. (Note: Additional flour may be needed if dough is sticky or more water should be used if dough is dry and cracking).
3. Wash jars and lids thoroughly.
4. Think of themes for your jars that would make them appealing to the mass market. Consider holidays, special occasions (births, marriages, etc.), hobbies or everyday uses (lunch money, washing machine money, etc.)
5. Put a small amount of water on your jar lid, and press onto it a smooth ball of clay that will form the base of your sculpture. Smooth the base with the PALMS of your hand, not your fingers because they'll leave marks. Put the lid back on the jar and turn it enough to keep it on. DON'T TIGHTEN THE LID!
6. Begin constructing your sculptured figures using balls and coils of clay. Attach pieces by first moistening the surfaces with a little water.
7. Start with large shapes first, then begin to add smaller details.
8. Constantly turn the jar, checking that all views of your sculpture are interesting. Think now of open forms, mass and volume.
9. Remove lid, place on a baking sheet, and, if you're making more than one jar, insert a slip of paper with a description of the lid into the empty jar.
10. Bake at 300 degrees for 3 hours. This time can vary a lot. 250 degrees for 5 hours is OK too.
11. After baking, add small details and lettering with a black water-based felt-tipped pen.
12. Reattach lid to jar and coat lid with 3-5 coats of clear varnish, shellac or clear nail polish.
13. If jar is a gift, add appropriate fillers (candy, coins, Q-tips, etc).

Evaluate your work:

1. Is the object interesting from a variety of views with interplay of mass and volume?
2. Do the raised shapes have a variety of heights and interesting textures?
3. Do the shapes relate to a theme appropriate for the mass market?
4. Is the craftsmanship good with careful details and working lid?