



YARD BIRDS ON A STICK

National Core Arts Standards - Visual

Creating

Anchor Standard #1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard #2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard #3: Refine and complete artistic work

Presenting

Anchor Standard #4: Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.

Connecting

Anchor Standard #10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.



GRADES 7-12

Cross Curricular – Art and Science

*Lesson Plan and Artwork by
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DESCRIPTION

Birds are always around us – sometimes still or perching, often hungry or hunting. Graceful in flight and expressive in their actions, they bring a special visual and vocal presence to our yards, cities, and countryside.

This lesson encourages the artist to freeze bird flight and details in flat clay slab reliefs, allowing the resulting sculpture to become a colorful part of the environment.

OBJECTIVES

- Observe and sketch various birds from nature or photographs. Draw them in flight or perching, hunting for food, being loud and rowdy, or quiet and safe from their predators. In your sketches, you will include body shape and details of head, feet and wings.
- Your major task will be to transfer the information from a linear sketch to slabs of clay, building up the bird in layers of clay that depict the essence of the bird in relief.



DIRECTIONS

1. Transfer bird sketches to a piece of tag board. They can be realistic or fun and comical.
2. Cut out your tag-board bird as a template. You may need more than one template.
3. Using a roller and guide sticks, roll out a clay slab a bit larger than your template. It should be $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{3}{8}$ " thick.
4. Texture clay with rollers or stamps to suggest the bird's feathers, structure, and details.
5. With a fettling knife or pin tool, cut out the clay shapes needed for your bird.
6. Assemble, overlap, cut away, model, and texture your clay to depict the bird.
7. Score and slip all shapes and parts to assemble your relief sculptured bird. The sculpture will be stronger as a whole than with lots of parts.
8. As your "yard bird" will be mounted on a vertical dowel rod, plan where the center of balance will be. Being sure there is plenty of clay in that area, gently push your $\frac{3}{16}$ " dowel rod up into the body, and make sure the rod will support your bird. As clay shrinks a bit when it dries and is bisque-fired, move the rod around a bit to gently enlarge the hole.
9. Finish the bird details and allow it to dry on a newspaper-covered board.
10. When dry, bisque-fire to cone 04, 1945°F.
11. Glaze the bird with two or three coats of fun and colorful Mayco Jungle Gems glazes. Fire to cone 05, 1888°F.
12. Mount bird on dowel rod glued into body hole.
13. If you want to display your bird on a base, create a fired clay support or use a block of wood for a base heavy enough to hold up your bird. Shorten the rod.



MATERIALS

Item #	Description
1464335	Mayco® Designer Texture Mat, 7 x 9 in, Retro Squares
409357	Mayco® Hosta Leaf Press Mold
411096	Mayco® Design Press Tool, Spiral Designs, Set of 4
2003170	Mayco® Jungle Gems™ Glaze Set, Pint, Set of 12
385142	Kemper Fettling Knife, Soft Blade
406511	Creativity Street® Birch Dowels, 3/16 x 36 in, Pack of 10
446432	Sax® Low Fire Earthenware White Art Clay, 50 lbs
409782	Clay Slabmaking Complete Kit