

Materials List

Puzzler Molds: by ClayPuzzling.com

BP334 Narrow Top Vase
BP523 Small Traditional Vase

Tool by ClayPuzzling.com

PT1 Press Tool

Brushes & Tools: by Royal & Langnickel Brush

SG825-6 Soft-Grip Bristle Fan
SG250-8 Soft-Grip Round
EWT8-38 Potter's Select Wooden Modeling Tools
PS01 Wire Clay Cutter
PS02 Clay Gun Set
PS06 3-Sided Stainless
PS08 Wooden Clay Roller
RSET-POT1 Basic Pottery Tool Set

Miscellaneous:

Clay body of choice
Glazes of choice
Newspaper
Boards

Contact the Artist

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Objective:

Students will learn to work with clay and a variety of tools to create unique textures on these ocean creatures.

Introduction:

Discuss the basics of clay with students and explain the firing process. Talk to students about the creatures they can design and have them do some research to explore the possibilities. The basic forms for these fish can begin with a cast object, pinch pot, coil vase, puzzled form or thrown shape.

Step 1) Give each student the appropriate amount of clay for the size fish they will create.

Step 2) Have students use chosen method for forming the vase to the desired size. Older students can use the wheel and younger pupils can use pinch or coil methods. Create thicker shapes since they will be applying pressure to attach parts and carve designs in the wet clay. See steps below for clay puzzling technique.

Step 3) Place several layers of newspaper over a board to use as the work surface. Lay the vase on its side and apply a little pressure to flatten slightly so the vase will not roll.

Step 4) Manipulate the opening in the vase to create lips. Press, turn and pull or add coils. If they want to add a tongue or teeth, create by hand, score, slip and attach.

Step 5) Roll balls of clay for the eyeballs and set in place. Flatten small pieces of clay to go over the top of the eyeballs and smooth into body.



Step 6) Flatten pieces of clay for the top and side fins. Score, slip and attach.

Step 7) Use the sculpting tools to add textures over fish.

Step 8) Allow to dry and fire to appropriate cone for clay selected.

Step 9) Apply glazes of choice and fire to appropriate temperature.

Clay Puzzling Fish

Step 1 Dust out the interior of the Bisque Puzzler Mold removing any dust or debris in the cavity.

Step 2 Tear off pieces of clay and flatten them to the desired thickness. This can be accomplished by pressing clay between your fingers and thumb or by rolling over the surface with an object like a rolling pin, dowel or other round objects. Try to get uniform thickness with each piece of clay.

Step 3 Press the flattened pieces of clay into each part of the mold cavity slightly overlapping one another. Do not go past the seam line area where the molds will meet. Excessive clay between these parts will not allow the mold to fit together properly.

Step 4 Press a towel over the entire clay surface forcing the clay chunks together and filling in any gaps.

Step 5 Place a long coil of clay along one side along the seam line. This should run parallel to the seam line and not go above. Clay going above the seam line will prevent the mold from going together properly.

Step 6 Lift the half of the mold without the coil and turn it over slowly making certain the clay is stuck to the mold and will not fall out when completely turned over. If the clay appears to want to fall out, drip a small amount of water between the clay and the mold in a few spots and press the clay.

Step 7 Place the mold halves together and wrap the Velcro strap around the mold, securing tightly.

Step 8 Stand the mold up and reach in with the press tool and press the coil of clay so it attaches the clay on both mold parts.

Step 9 Remove the Velcro strap and gently pry the mold halves apart. Do not force the mold parts if they do not come apart easily. Sometimes the molds will need to sit for a while allowing the clay to firm up before the mold will come apart with ease. Forcing the mold open could cause the piece to split.

Step 10 Once you have one part of the mold removed the other half may need to sit in the other half until firm enough to stand on its own. Remove the other mold half when the piece can stand on its own.

Step 11 Once the solid puzzled vase is removed from the mold, use the tools from the basic pottery tool kit to smooth the seams and imperfections. Fill in any gaps with moist clay and smooth with the rib and sponge. Use caution with water. Don't allow the item to get too wet or it may collapse.