

Ceramics & Sculpture
JAPANESE CLAY SLAB LANTERNS

Name: _____

Background

Gardens play an important role in Japanese culture, and have been around for thousands of years. Transformations of Japanese gardens over time reflect changes in religion, politics, architecture, and aesthetics. In other words, how people felt about various issues, affected the way they designed gardens. Japanese gardens may be designed for recreation, reflection, or the display of a particular plant or grouping of rocks. The purpose of the garden may require the visitor to stroll through on a specific path, or to view quietly from a seated position.

Japanese gardens are like 3-D paintings that use natural materials to create a certain look or feel. Like other living things in nature, the Japanese believe that rocks and stones are home to different spirits. The placement of stones, or objects made from them, are integral to the look and feel of a garden. The **karesansui** style of garden is made almost completely of rocks. Pebbles and stones can be raked and arranged to create the feeling of water.

Stone lanterns are an important feature in many Japanese gardens. When lanterns were first introduced to Japan, they were made from metal for temple, or shrine, doors. The stone lantern, or **ishi-toro**, was later used to gently light the paths and gardens of Buddhist temples and shrines. They were also traditionally used to provide soft light for tea ceremonies. Like all other elements of Japanese gardens, placement of lanterns is thoughtfully planned. <See Japanese Lanterns PowerPoint for more notes>

Vocabulary

Shape: an area enclosed by a line, can be **organic** or **geometric**.

Template: pattern or guide used to create a specific design or shape

Functional Art: art that is purposeful and useful

Ishi-toro: stone lanterns used in Japanese gardens

Incising: Subtractive method of clay decorating where the clay is carved into to create a design/texture.

Project

1. For this assignment you will be creating a **functional** ceramic lantern. Think about where you would like to display your lantern. How will its environment influence its structure and overall design? Think also about the traditional lanterns you have seen. Will they influence your design as well? Use the following boxes to create thumbnail sketches of your lantern form & two designs to be **incised**.

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2. The next step is to create **templates**, or stencils, for your lantern. These will need to be full size so you can trace around them onto slabs of clay. Start by making a template for the base of the lantern. This will help you determine what you will need for the sides. Everything must be measured using the utmost of care ensure all measurements are exact! (Remember to use TWO dots to make a straight line). Each clay piece must have a corresponding template piece. Cut these out and carefully tape together. You will need to un-tape them later to transfer to clay.

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3. Start planning where you will cut out **shapes** to allow candle light to be seen! These shapes are considered your designs.

4. When the templates are complete, you can roll out **slabs** of clay using a **rolling pin and guide rails** or the **slab** roller. Use a **needle tool** or **knife** to cut out the shapes you will need for your lantern. (**Don't forget to cut out the shapes for the "holes" in your lantern!**) The slabs will need to become **leatherhard** before you can begin assembling the lantern. To allow them to reach the leatherhard stage, you will need to create ALL the slabs and allow them to dry at the same rate; therefore, stacking them in the bag with scrap paper between them for a day will allow for proper drying.

5. When assembling your lantern, be sure to **score and slip** the areas you will be joining. Reinforce the seams with small coils of clay; Known as **reinforcing coils**. Do not join the lantern lid to the base. You will want easy access to the candle inside. **Mrs. Brown will demonstrate how to create the lid of your lanterns.

6. Add more embellishments if you desire, and allow your lantern to become bone dry. It will be **bisque** fired, **glazed**, and glaze fired.

Rubric

Planning

- At least 1 sketch of overall form of lantern & style / 15
- At least 2 design sketches / 20
- Completed & accurate maquette made from construction paper & tape. / 50

Composition

- Created using the appropriate Slab Method: Equal thickness and measurements of slabs. / 50
- Size requirement: No greater than 10" / 10
- Interesting form w/ lid present. / 15
- Texture/Design designs present (at least 2); plus Japanese characters. / 30
- Glaze finish / 15

Craftsmanship

- Neatness? Cracks? Smooth?
- Lid is appropriately fitted & designed. / 25
- No thumb prints.
- No glaze problems: runs, crazing, etc.

Responsibility & Effort

- Kept up with rubric?
- Used class time wisely? Did not rush. / 25
- Was focused on project making in class – Not socializing.

Creativity & Originality

TOTAL: / 265

DUE: FRIDAY, MAY 1st @ the end of the class for Bisque Firing.