



Grafton



Craftowell



# Developing the Slab Technique in Clay

## Unit 2 with Face Mugs

Mrs. Bailey

## Sculpture Objectives

Use handbuilding techniques to construct a mug with 3D facial features. Apply 3D Design Elements & Principles

**Line:** Additive / Subtractive

**Shape:** organic / geometric

**Form:** cylindrical slab cup

**Balance:** Symmetry/Asymmetry

**Emphasis:** Focal Area

**Unity:** harmony / oneness

When you are finished write an Artist Statement about your work.



## Determined Face Mug by Mitchell Grafton

- Artist Statement Example -

It is hard to make it through this life without getting a few scars, and I am glad that it's not easy to see some of the wounds that were cut the deepest. This mug has been through some tough times, he has been through fires of adversity and he has the scars to prove it. But it has built in him a grit and a determination to keep on going, to never give up, never give in, to keep on fighting until he holds his dreams in his hands. He will finish strong.

# Line



Different tools make different kinds of **lines**.

# Shape



**Shapes** come in many types and sizes.

# Color



Every **color** can be bright, dull, dark, or light.

# Value



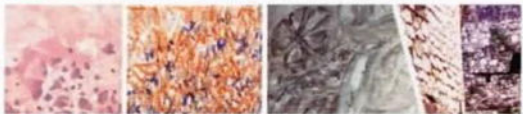
**Value** refers to dark and light in painting or drawing.

# Form



**Form** is three-dimensional, and takes up space.

# Texture



**Texture** is how a surface of something feels or looks.

# Space



We use illusions to make **space** in art.

# Balance



**Balance** is the comfortable arrangement of things in art.

# Contrast



**Contrast** is the difference between elements in an artwork.

# Emphasis



**Emphasis** is the creation of a focal area in a work of art.

# Movement



**Movement** is how we get around in a work of art.

# Pattern



**Pattern** decorates surfaces with planned, repeated units.

# Rhythm



**Rhythm** is the repetition of shapes, lines, and forms.

# Unity



**Unity** means that all is in **harmony**. **Variety** adds interest.

## Beginner School: Practice Sculpture of Observation Human Face

Observations from life practice: create one of each feature

Ears [Sculpting The Ear](#)

Eye [Sculpting The Eyes](#)

Mouth [Sculpting The Mouth](#)

Nose [Exercise 2: Sculpting The Nose!](#)



**For this project, you will learn the Slab technique. Your project may be functional or sculptural with additional handbuilding techniques (pinch, coil, slab).**

**Objective: Use the sculpting techniques that you learn from practicing the eye, mouth, nose, ear and then** Students will create an expressive human face on the pot while integrating their natural inspiration into the piece.

Decide which emotion or theme that you are going to create.

Possibilities can be  
Realism. Whimsical. Symbolic.

**Welcome to Pottery class. Please, pay close attention to the craftsmanship of your coil pottery. Coil pottery is a method of handbuilding pottery where a potter forms a base, walls, and style by combining clay coils (or cylinders). The potter rolls the clay into coils, stacks the coils together, and joins the coils through pressure creating a vessel. There are resources and imagery to look at in Schoology. As you finish the coil pottery you will begin the observation sculpture of an ear, eye, mouth and ear. I have a handout for you to look at.**

**Bienvenidos a la clase de Cerámica. Por favor, preste mucha atención a la artesanía de su cerámica en espiral. La cerámica en espiral es un método de construcción manual de cerámica en el que un alfarero forma una base, paredes y estilo combinando bobinas (o cilindros) de arcilla. El alfarero enrolla la arcilla en espirales, las apila y une las espirales mediante presión creando un recipiente. Hay recursos e imágenes para observar en Schoology. Al terminar la cerámica en espiral, comenzará la escultura de observación de una oreja, un ojo, una boca y una oreja. Tengo un folleto para que lo mires.**

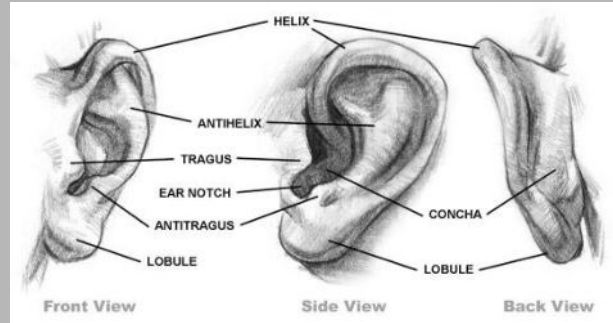
Watch the video as you sculpt. This is the Handout for visual reference or you can use a photo or a person: Practice

Observation: Ear, Eye, Mouth, Nose Michelangelo



Practice Observation Final will look similar to these examples :  
Ear, Eye, Mouth, Nose





Set out your tools and start shaping the concha (the hole that tunnels into your inner ear) near the front side of the ear. It's essentially a backwards C-shape, curving towards the face side of the ear

Begin by taking your 2" ball of clay and make a general ear shape. In the video, Kent is working on a left ear, so it may be helpful for you to also make a left ear so you can copy his moves along the way. Attach the back side of your clay to your board so it doesn't slide around while you're working on it.

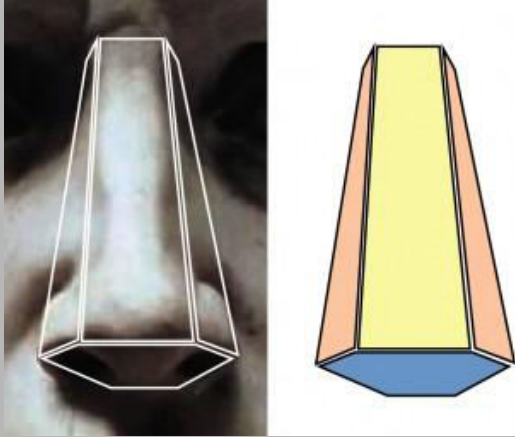


Roll out your clay into the slab then build the ear. Put a coil behind the earlobe so that it is not flat.



## 1.Ears [Sculpting The Ear](#)

## Nose [Exercise 2: Sculpting The Nose!](#)

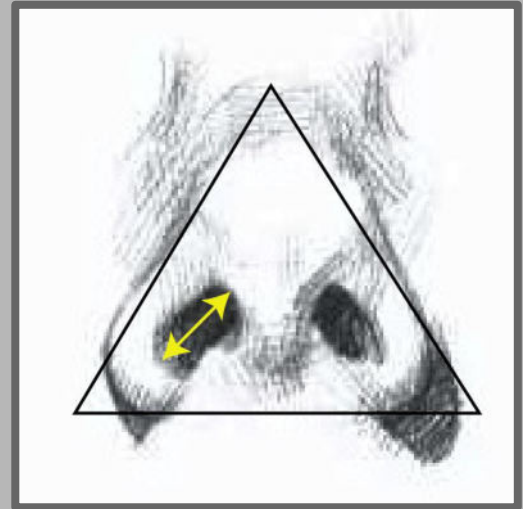


If we look closely at David's nose and break it down into the basic planes, it looks like this:



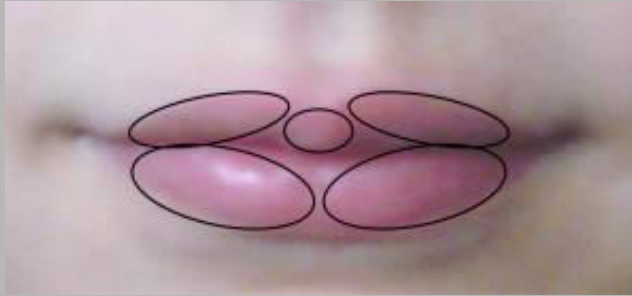
Michelangelo, *David* (detail), 1501-1504, marble

The nostrils are a basic oval or bean shape that extend back towards the face. They come closer together near the tip of the nose.



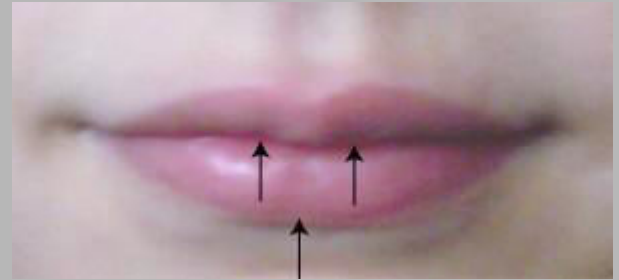
## Mouth [Sculpting The Mouth](#)

You can see from the side that the top lip protrudes out further than the bottom lip and the bottom lip protrudes out further than the chin, like a descending staircase.



The top lip can be effectively divided into three sections—the two outside pieces connected to a soft ball shape in the center. That soft ball shape in the center is defined by indents on either side of it, making the center of the top lip dip slightly into the bottom lip.

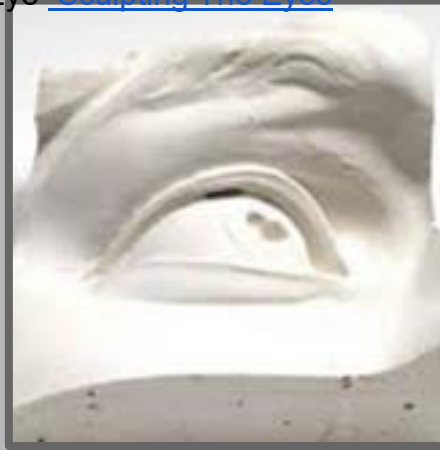
The bottom lip is divided in two pieces, exactly in half where the two shapes meet and make a slight indent.



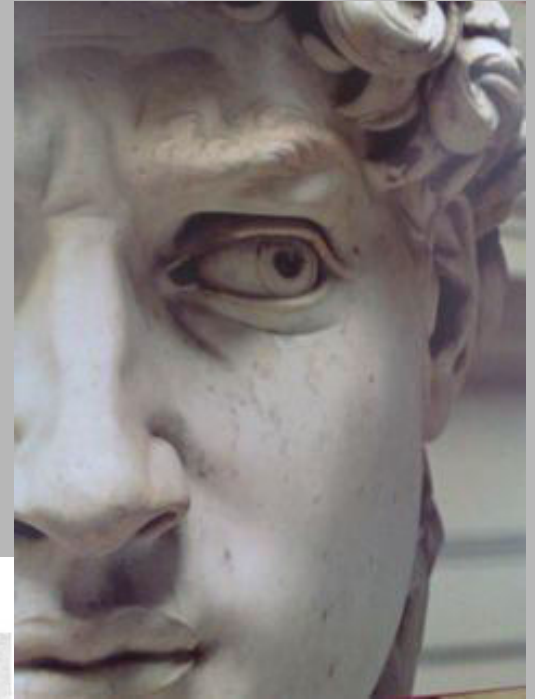
Indents

In the video, Kent starts out with a 2" ball of clay on his wood board. He pushes it down onto his board and creates the basic structure of the eye socket. Remember the reason we do this is because the shape of the bones will inform the shape of the skin on top. As Kent says in the video, "...with all sculptures, you should be considering what's underneath first before you start putting fatty tissue and muscular portions onto your sculpture...especially around the eye because the skull plays so much a part of the way the eye looks in the end."

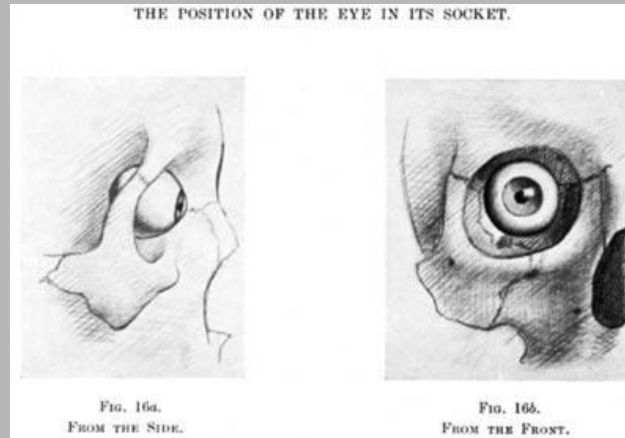
## Eye [Sculpting The Eyes](#)



"in David's right eye. **The eyelid has a flat ridge on the side that touches the eyeball.** This is very important in creating a realistic eye".



Michelangelo, *David* (detail),  
1501-1504, marble





## Time

Give yourself plenty of time to work on a given day. At the end of your class, make sure you have given yourself enough time to clean up and organize your space. Give yourself time in the studio not just to work on your sculpture, but to step back and look at your work. Looking and seeing are very important parts of the artistic process. If you just hunker down and work, work, work, you may stand up, step back, and realize you've forgotten a very important part, or that things are out of proportion.



Students will have 12 classes to build this project; the first couple of classes will be for demonstration and motivation, while practicing the ear, nose mouth eye. The following classes will consist of studio work time, and as we go through project process; we will share our successes and unexpected discoveries.

You are graded on consistent and daily effort in craftsmanship.



Talk with your teacher about your process. We are here to help you.



THREE VARIATIONS  
ON MAKING A  
SIMPLE CYLINDRICAL  
SLAB CUP WITH THREE  
DIFFERENT HANDLES





Two Approaches  
Making Conical Slab  
Cups with Texture

## HOW TO CREATE A MONSTER MUG





CLICK HERE FOR 7 SIMPLE AND STUNNING  
HANDLES FOR POTTERY!



Remember as you continue:

-Clay projects cannot be more than an inch thick or they run the risk of exploding in the kiln.

**-Score and Slip all pieces you are attaching.**

**-Clay Stages:** The first stage is when it is soft, plastic, and workable. The second stage is when it is leather hard. And the third stage is when it is bone dry.

# Stages of Clay



## Slip/Slurry

Clay mixed with water into a pudding-like or liquid consistency.  
Used for joining clay, slip trailing, and slip casting.



## Plastic

Soft, workable clay that can be easily molded and formed.  
Used for hand-building, extruding and wheel throwing.



## Leather-Hard

Clay that has hardened slightly.  
This is the ideal stage for carving clay and building tall slab constructions.



## Bone-Dry

Clay that is completely dried and ready to be fired.  
Clay is very fragile at this stage.



## Bisqueware

Clay that has been transformed into ceramic material after being fired once.  
Ready to be glazed, stained or painted.



## Glazeware

Ceramic material with glaze applied and fired a second time.

Recyclable

Non-Recyclable

-Leather hard clay is partially dried clay. Because it still has around 15% water content, it can still be worked. However, it is firm enough that it does not distort when handled. Leather hard clay is versatile and can be trimmed, scored, smoothed, burnished, painted with slip or underglaze, and joined.

-Clay that is later on in the leather hard stage will be harder and less workable.

-Clay needs to air dry (bone dry) completely before it can be put in the kiln, so the thicker/larger the project the longer it will take to dry.

Face

Mug

Eyes

MITCHELL GRAFTON

SCULPTING A FACE

MUG - TIME LAPSE



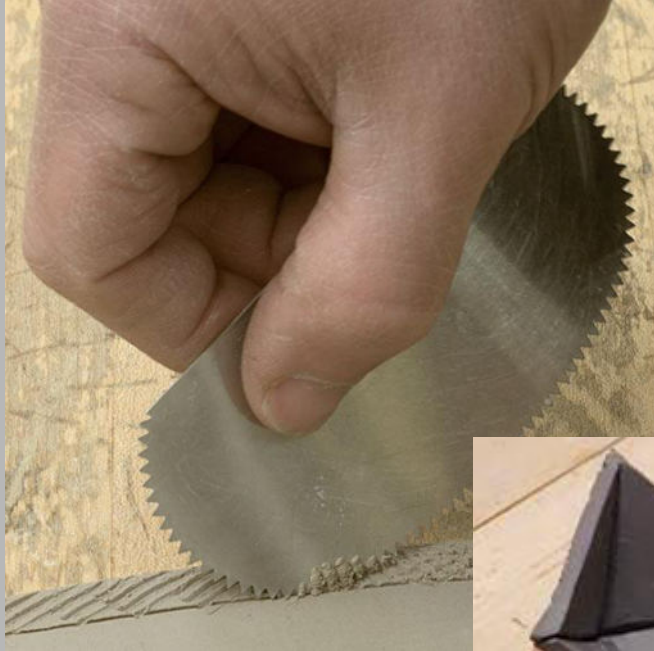
Maureen Joyce | Make-A-Face Mug

## Visual Examples of Moods

### Mood List



**Make a form based on the slab technique. Add a coil to reinforce the seams and walls.**



Make thin coil (soft clay)



Place coil in seam



Blend with wooden tool



Smooth and compress coil



<https://www.lakesidepottery.com/Pages/Pottery-tips/How-to-make-large-slab-form.htm>

Example of Slab with Whimsical art is a **vibrant and playful style of art that is childlike and carefree**. Commonly associated with children's book illustrations and fairy tale art, this artwork lifts the spirit and makes you happy.



Creating a Folded Slab Box from a One Piece Pattern -An Intermediate to Advanced Technique for students who want an advanced assignment  
[Creating a Folded Slab Lidded Pot from a One Piece Pattern - An Intermediate to Advanced Technique](#)



You may choose alternative slab projects like fairy houses and plant holders.



Pottery Video: Tips for Strong Joints on  
Slab-built Pottery | LISA NAPLES



**You can watch these videos if you want an alternative project.**

Watch a slab video to understand how you can create Slab Pottery.

What is your favorite form?

Geometric? Organic? Conical?

**You can watch these videos if you want an alternative project.**

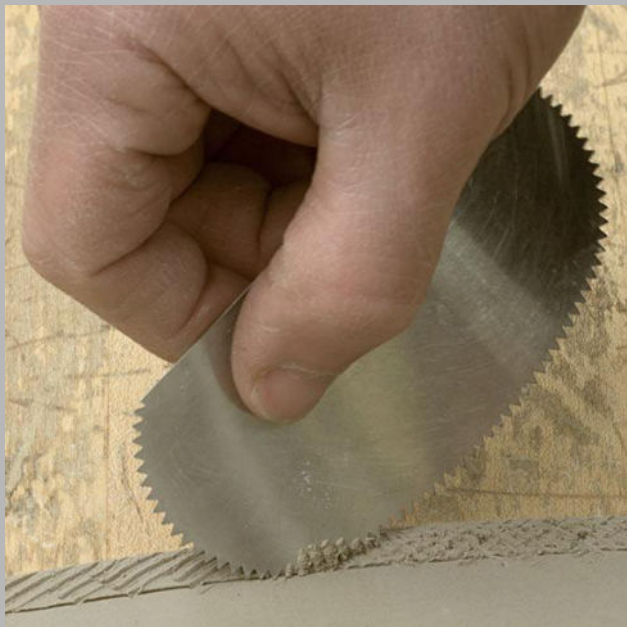
**Bridges Pottery Slab Construction Demo**



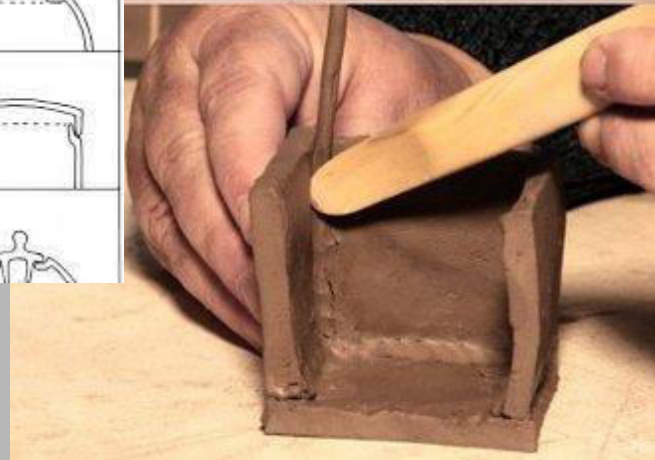
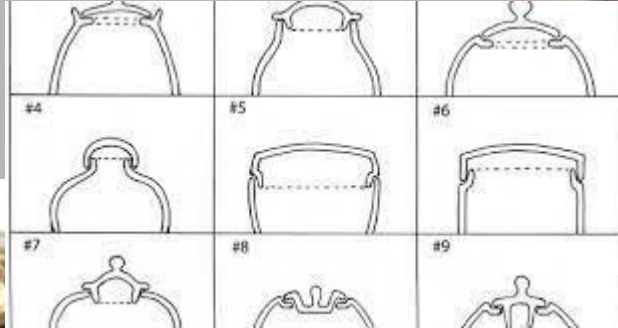
Creating a Conical Slab Cup with a  
Darted Bottom- with Pattern Download

# Step 5 What Materials do you need for your project?

Rolling Pin, cloth to roll out the clay on



**Reminder: Add a coil to reinforce the seams and walls**  
**If you have a lid**  
**Secure the lid with a notch,**  
**coil or shape.**



# Requirements: Rubric

**Criteria 1 – Slab Technique:** Created a successful SLAB form using good technique and craftsmanship. = Joining is secure and Score marks are hidden.

**Criteria 2 – Applied Elements of Art:** **Line:** Additive / Subtractive **Shape:** organic / geometric  
**Form:** cylindrical slab cup

**Criteria 3 – Decoration:** Student used additive or subtractive techniques to add decoration into the form of the “slab”. Design is well thought out with good craftsmanship. Has **Unity**.

**Criteria 4 – Effort:** took **time** to develop idea & complete project? (Didn't rush.) Good use of class time?

**Criteria 5 – Craftsmanship** – Neat, clean & complete? Skillful use of the art tools & media? You cleans up after yourself.

# Artist Statement

## Artist Reflection

**Write a paragraph in the space below. Answer each of the 3 questions that should be explained in an artist statement. Make sure to write clearly in your preferred language (avoid social media lingo LOL) *DO NOT ANSWER THESE IN #FORMAT, WRITE A PARAGRAPH ON THE NEXT PAGE.***

- 1. Big Idea.** What is the big idea behind your artwork? Why did you choose the elements (line, shape, form, texture, value, color and space) that you did?
- 2. Goals.** What were your goals for this artwork other than just completing the requirement?
- 3. Thoughts.** What are your overall thoughts of this artwork? Tell me something that you liked about how it turned out and what you want to improve on for next time. What were your unexpected discoveries?