

A Progression Pathway in Clay Work

The following AccessArt resources, contributed by artist-educators, have been selected to try to illustrate what a progression pathway might look like for children and young teenagers working in clay.

While thinking about progression, please do consider that:

1. Skills can only progress with frequent opportunity and practice, and
2. Progression is not linear but the result of multiple routes, rich with unexpected outcomes, and
3. Creativity is a fragile process that is hard to measure and assess but instead should be nurtured and supported.

With these points highlighted, here is what progression might look like. Follow the thumbnails to take you to AccessArt resources.



From Early Years

Woodland Exploration by Caroline Wendling & Deborah Wilenski



Artists Caroline Wendling and Deborah Wilenski encourage young children in a woodland exploration using art and imagination as their discovery tools.

Nest By Paula Briggs



[Paula gives children the tools to both draw and make. Children worked with hard and soft pencils, graphite, wax resist, watercolour, clay and sticks.](#)

From Key Stage One

How to Clay Play



[This resource, commissioned by Cambridge City Council, encourages being together through making and introduces the basics of working with Scolaquip air-hardening clay.](#)

Ofsted are Coming Tomorrow!



Primary school teacher, Sue Brown, shares her experience of an Ofsted Deep Dive in Art and gives advice to other teachers on how they might prepare themselves.

Quick Clay Figurative Sketches By Paula Briggs



Paula provided young children with the opportunity to explore clay as a “short term” construction and modelling material. Without being fired, the dry clay has a limited lifespan, and the sculptures will crumble, but I think it’s important to remind ourselves that even without access to a kiln, clay can still be regarded as a valuable sculptural material.

Decorative Clay Coil Pots by Sharon Gale



This simple clay pot making resource is not the traditional way of making coil pots but it's lots of fun and by using different paint effects, the end results can be very interesting. We worked on this project for two, two-hour sessions.

Making Plaster Reliefs By Paula Briggs



This resource describes how to create plaster reliefs using clay and foamboard moulds. It is based upon a session which took place at Bourn Primary Academy with a group of Year 5 children.

Clay Art Medals by Sharon Gale



In this three stage resource,

students make a circular medal from clay depicting their own profile, look at examples of fun lettering and devise a short, fun or meaningful phrase to paint inside their portrait profile. Clay art medals are a fun way to link class topics with an art activity.

Japan: Making Sushi – Recycled Style! By Jan Miller



Inspired by research into Japanese culture, children explored the potential and limitations of paper and recycled materials, learning through play and experimentation to make 3D forms. The outcomes of this process were used to inform work created in a second medium of clay, using kitchen equipment to shape the clay and add textures.

From Key Stage Two

Japan – Ceramics Inspire Painting and Painting Inspires Ceramics By Jan Miller



Jan shares a Year Three class

project that uses the work of a contemporary Japanese ceramicist to inspire vibrant paintings in a variety of materials. The children then used their own art to design ceramic vessels.

Clay 'Portrait' Miniatures by Sharon Gale



Portrait miniatures are small painted images, usually of monarchs and very wealthy, important people. Dating back to the 1520s, these tiny portraiture paintings are like medals, but with realistic colour. This two stage clay and painting resource is very versatile because essentially the miniatures are blank canvases.

Clay Slab Work by Andy Cairns



This resource explores how to make an armature and use clay slab to build a form. Based upon the legend of "Black Shuck", a ghostly dog that roams the coast searching for its drowned masters, this project engaged the children and resulted in charismatic sculptures, but you could equally transfer the activity to other themes.

Fruit-Inspired Clay Tiles By Rachel Dormor



Ceramicist Rachel Dormor shares a workshop idea suitable for primary or secondary aged children. Working in clay, pupils take their inspiration from drawings of fruit to make decorative clay tiles.

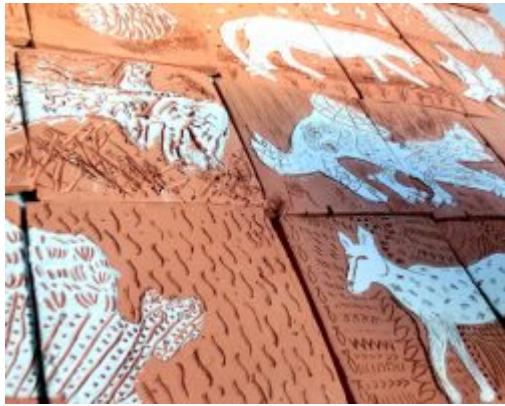
Fruit Pinch Pot Project By Rachel Dormor



Ceramicist Rachel Dormor shares a workshop idea suitable for primary or secondary aged children. Working in clay, pupils take their inspiration from drawings of fruit to make simple pinch pot mugs.

From Key Stage Three and Beyond

Chimera Drawings into Beautiful Terracotta Tiles By Eleanor Somerset



Sgraffito, or 'scratching' is a technique which is an excellent way to reinforce mark making with all age groups.

Drawing into leather hard red clay tiles to create designs using mark-making can be even more effective when done through a white earthenware slip to reveal the red clay beneath.

Exploring Materials: Clay and Water by Sheila Ceccarelli



Sheila asked teenagers at AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class when the last time was that they had played with clay?

Arts and Minds: Manipulating Clay with Water by Sheila Ceccarelli



[This post](#) shows how to facilitate a sensory session exploring water and clay – by Sheila Ceccarelli (artist) and Yael Pilowsky Bankirer (Psychotherapist) for Arts and Minds.

Painted Clay by Melissa Pierce Murray



[This post](#) was inspired by the Japanese art of dorondongo, where mud and dirt are shaped and buffed into highly polished spheres. We made clay spheres and other simple forms in clay, and once dry, painted them with ink and acrylic.

Exploring Portraits with Eleanor Somerset



[In this resource](#) artist, Eleanor

Somerset shows how she led students in The Little Art Studio, Sheffield, to explore and discover portraiture through various media.

Introducing Sgraffito using a Coloured Clay Slip on a Terracotta Tile By Eleanor Somerset



[Further explore how to make beautiful sgraffito, or 'scratched drawings' with artist Eleanor Somerset.](#)

From Bones and Body to Structure and Form By Melissa Pierce Murray



[Artist Melissa Pierce Murray worked with teenagers from AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class on a series of workshops which physically explored drawing and sculptural responses to form, forces and anatomy.](#)

Simple Clay Moulds by Melissa Pierce Murray



[In this post](#), artist Melissa Pierce Murray, shows, step-by-step, how young teenagers explored plaster casting by making simple clay 'waste moulds' and then moved on to making simple 'two piece moulds'.

Casting a Negative Space in Plaster with Sculptor Rachel Wooller



[Resident artist at ArtWorks Studios, Cambridge, Rachel Wooller, introduces teenagers at AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class to the process of casting and creating negative shapes in plaster from clay positives.](#)

Rowan: Clay Coiling Techniques to Make Penguins, Tweety Pie and a Dalek too! by Abi Moore and Sarah Nibbs



[Abi](#), Sarah and students at Rowan Humberstone, show how they made clay birds using clay coiling techniques and with a plaster mould for the birds' bases.

Rowan: Making a Clay Bird from a Mould by Abi Moore and Sarah Nibbs



[Abi](#) and students from Rowan Humberstone, describe how they made clay birds from a plaster mould.

Modelling The Head in Clay by Melissa Pierce Murray



[Artist Melissa Pierce Murray](#) led a

series of workshops for AccessArt's Experimental Drawing Class in which the teenagers modelled a head in clay. There are five resources in this series, beginning with constructing an armature and making preparatory drawings, then studying the bone structure of the skull before moving on to features. The final post in this series looks at ways to increase the techniques and approaches used in drawing.

Design Lab: Phoebe Cummings at the V&A



Students, from the DesignLab at the V&A, London, worked with artist Phoebe Cummings over a three month period to create a site-specific, group piece, from unfired clay which was inspired by the historical 2D designs found on 19th century British tableware in the collection.

Life Drawing Class: Visual Impressions

Research: Life Drawing & Adolescents

Walking and Drawing

Foreshortened Sketches

The Story of Cupid and Psyche by Jacopo del Sellaio (1442 – 1493)

In this post, Kate Noble, Education Officer at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge shares the story of Cupid and Psyche as depicted in the 15th Century painting by Jacopo Del Sellaio. This is one of a series of posts from Inspire: A Celebration of Children's Art at the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

Wall Drawings with Tape

Classical Inks

Nib & Ink Mark Making Still Life

Many thanks to accessArt Young Artist
Rowan Briggs Smith



Young
Artists



Exploring Black & White Film Photography

AccessArt Young Artist Mitch shares his passion and process in analogue photography.

Graffiti With Teens

In this class teenagers work with Melissa Pierce Murray and take inspiration from the motivations and methods of Graffiti artists.

Tall Skinny

Teenagers working with Melissa Pierce Murray used thin wire to make works with a strong presence. They began by looking at examples of works by two contemporary women artists including Phyllida Barlow and Rebecca Warren.

Layers

Teenagers draw on layers of acetate to make a palimpsest with Melissa Pierce Murray.

The Making of: “Being Creative Builds Your Sense of Self”: A Simple Building Block Animation

Be inspired to make a simple stop motion animation using building bricks!

Simple Animation: Making a Flick Book

Flick books are a great way to make simple animations.

Animation Software

Simple advice to help you chose and use accessible animation software and hardware. No experience needed!

The Making of: “Everyone Else is Better Than Me!”

Simple animation technique using a vegetable, but a great example of how a clear message and thoughtful animation can communicate emotion.

All That Glitters...

Teacher and artist Jan Miller shows year three pupils works by the artist Andrew Logan. Pupils then have fun playing with materials that glitter and sparkle, developing their design and making skills to produce personalised brooches, decorative

images of celebrities and gorgeous treasure glitter boards. Finally, they explore portrait drawing, creating a sparkly 'selfie'!

Making A Creative Response – Physical to Aural

As part of the teenage #BeACreativeProducer Project, we have been exploring how we can trust and use “instinct” in relation to finding starting points to generate ideas and enable creativity. In this post, AccessArt Young Artist Alex Tunstall shares what happened when he received a “box” of physical stimuli to inspire an aural response.

Simple Casting Techniques – by Melissa Pierce Murray

Artist Melissa Pierce Murray led a series of workshops for teenagers exploring a variety of casting techniques.