

Clay 'Portrait' Miniatures

By [Sharon Gale](#) working with KS1 & KS2 students at Northaw C.E. Primary School

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 canvasses. In this particular workshop, the subject matter had to link with KS2 Geography and the topic of rivers. Students were asked to research their favourite creature or plant, that made the British riverside its home. They made their miniatures from clay and painted their chosen wildlife onto them.

Allow enough time to get the clay miniature making completed in one go, I would suggest three hours. Plan for the painting to be completed at a later date, once the clay has fully dried. Allow a few hours for the painting too.

The portrait miniatures collection at the Victorian and Albert Museum and Grayson Perry's 'The Earl of Essex' portrait of former X Factor contestant Rylan Clark, were a source of inspiration.



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