

As an art teacher, I paid particular attention to the museums, art works and cultures of the two countries. My curriculum projects focus on art projects, ceramics, sculpture, architecture and crafts. But first it is necessary to explain how grading in my art classes works before I elaborate on how I will incorporate my Fulbright experiences into my curriculum and the classroom. Many people, including fellow teachers think that art is graded subjectively. If the work is aesthetically pleasing then it deserves a high grade. Often students are confused as to what work constitutes an “A” etc. It is my goal to provide concrete measurable goals in all of my art offerings.

Grades in my classes are intended to be measures of progress toward set standards of quality. The intent is to make the “subjective” nature of art less of a factor in students’ grades and to promote work toward progressively higher quality. Essentially, the process is as follows: specific, objective standards are set for each project; projects are evaluated by the student, with teacher consultation, against those standards; grades are defined in reference to standards, both on individual projects and for grading terms.

Central to this process are two concepts: **self-evaluation** and **authentic assessment**. Self-evaluation means that students are involved in evaluating their own work, comparing it against set standards or standards developed by students. This is accomplished through students’ filling out grading sheets and turning them in to the teacher, engaging in both formal and informal conferences with the teacher, and receiving critiques. Authentic assessment means that the students’ actual products, not indirect measures like tests and quizzes, are the primary means of assessing progress. This does not mean that tests and quizzes are never given, only that the products (or portfolio) that a student creates are always the most important measure of progress.

QUALITY STANDARDS:

For each project, and for each grading term, specific standards are set will be used to evaluate student work. As an example, here are the standards for a beginning pottery project:

Coil mug

1. 6” minimum high (greenware)
2. Straight, vertical sides
3. Must have correctly proportioned handle
4. Smooth Glazed Interior

5. Well- attached handles and lugs
6. No Cracks
7. Even or regular rim, edges rounded to prevent glaze parting (crawling)
8. Clean even glaze line

You will notice that these standards are specific, observable and quantifiable. No purely subjective terms like “creative”, “aesthetically pleasing” or “beautiful” are used. Do these qualities count in art? Yes. But because they are subjective they are difficult to define. Therefore the standards for this project concentrate on qualities that can be taught and demonstrated specifically in class, and are objectively observable. More subjective elements of art, like those mentioned above are considered, but only for “exceeding standards” (see grades).

Standards are also set for each grading term. As an example, the 1st Quarter Mid-term standard for beginning pottery might be: 1. Three projects complete to greenware; 2. One project complete to glaze stage; 3. Notes and grading sheets complete; 4. “B” or better on materials safety and studio procedures test. Usually, the grading term standards will be discussed with the class before being set, and class members will have input on the standards. Standards for projects or grading terms are intended to make expectations clear to students, to provide a basis for grading, and to promote technical quality in students’ work. The teacher’s challenges are to set high but achievable standards, teach the specific skills and expectations to students, demonstrate and teach self-evaluation and student record-keeping, monitor individual and class progress on standards and to help students to achieve higher levels of quality.

DEFINITION OF GRADES:

The traditional definition of grades, A = Exceptional, B = Above average, etc., makes little sense when applied in a standards-based learning environment. What is “average” in terms of meeting a specific standard? Instead, grades in my classes are defined in reference to standards:

A = Work exceeds standards. Work shows evidence of skills and effort beyond what is required for project or activity. Exceptional craftsmanship / creativity / design or effort.

B = Work meets standards. Mastery of all required skills and techniques. Good craftsmanship as defined by standards and evidence of effort in completing project.

C = Work is below standards in one or more required elements or is incomplete, but shows evidence of effort. Student must be able to document

or describe effort to improve.

D = This grade will not be used. Passing grades are indicators of meeting standards through effort and skill, and are already covered by the “A”, “B” & “C” categories.

F = Failure to complete work, lack of effort.

As you can see, “B” is the standard grade earned for completing projects to standards. This means that those more subjective ideas like “creativity” or “beauty” fall into the “A” category - exceeds standards. + or - grades can be used for projects or performances which fall between the descriptions.

GRADING PROCEDURES:

Using the standards and grades as defined above, students in my classes are involved in self - evaluation of their work. This process needs to be taught and reinforced. Because most students have learned that they do the work and the teacher evaluates it. After first encountering a true self - evaluation system it takes a while for students to trust that they will in fact be held responsible for assigning grades and to understand the need to keep records. As a general rule, I never change a student’s self-assigned grade without a conference with the student. Most teachers in a traditional system are surprised to find that I more frequently change grades upward than downward. If students work toward clear standards that they understand, I have found that they are usually very accurate and honest in assigning grades to their work. Students sometimes are “optimistic”, but when asked to show how they met or exceeded standards in a conference, they almost always select the grade which best describes their performance. Often, high achieving students are hesitant to assign an “A” for work that exceeds standards, and need to be shown the ways in which it does.

Record keeping can become an issue with students. While I record all grades as assignments are completed, I require students to keep all grading sheets and turn them in at grading periods. Why? First, because I want to reinforce the idea that students are evaluating their own performance, and therefore need to keep a record. Secondly, because it provides me with a check on student grades and an easy way to examine progress or consistent problems with quality.

In general, the process of evaluation and grading works as follows:

- A project is assigned and the quality standards shared / explained. In the

case of beginning pottery classes, these are put on a sheet covering the entire semester.

- Students are instructed in the techniques required to meet the standards, through demonstration, lecture, reading and/or guided practice (studio time).
- Students complete the project and fill out a grading sheet. For pottery projects, grades are assigned at greenware, bisque and glazed stages. When filling out the sheet, students assign themselves a grade based on the standards above.
- The student brings the completed project and grading sheet to the instructor. The project is examined, and if needed, specific standards are discussed. The instructor records the grade in grade book & returns grading sheet to student. This is repeated at each stage for pottery, mostly as “insurance” against breakage or loss.
- At each grading period (mid-term, quarter or semester), the grading standard for that period is shared with students. Students fill out self-evaluation forms with the standards for that period printed on them, along with questions the students answer about their performance (see example attached). Students then turn in the self-evaluations, along with grading sheets, to the instructor.
- Formal grading conferences are held with each student to discuss the self-assigned grade. Final grades are then recorded.

A final word: I strongly believe that for evaluation to be useful (that is, part of learning), it must have the following qualities: 1. It should be understandable - no mysteries; 2. It should be fair - everyone works to the same standard; 3. It must be participatory - evaluation is something students do, not something that happens to them; 4. It must be positive - the idea is to get better, not to get caught making mistakes. If these conditions are met, grading is both useful and pleasant, for both student and teacher. I think the system I have described is a good start on all 4 qualities.

I currently teach Ceramics, and Advanced Ceramics. These classes are considered electives, meaning that, ideally, students choose to take my classes. Realistically, though, that isn't always the case. It is my responsibility to win over all of my students and convince them that art classes can be relevant. This can be accomplished through a broad and well-designed curriculum development process. My Fulbright experiences have helped me shape and reinvent projects that include a part of a newly discovered world of art.

Project #5 Cultural Mask—Handout and Research required

1. Research handout and drawings
2. Concave form—supported with newspaper armature (greenware)
3. 12” minimum length top to bottom (greenware)
4. Relieved interiors (nose for example)
5. Well-attached features
6. 2 color minimum—Handout—may be glazed or acrylic painted

Students spend two class periods in the library, first looking up different masks from a wide variety of cultures; once they have chosen a mask, students will receive a research information sheet. Some students chose to make a mask from their own culture, while others are interested in cultures that are different from their own experience. The Asian culture is very much an interest for my students and now I can direct them to artifacts from Thai culture such the Khon mask and its use in theatrical performances. The following handout is the research information sheet given to students once they have selected a mask.



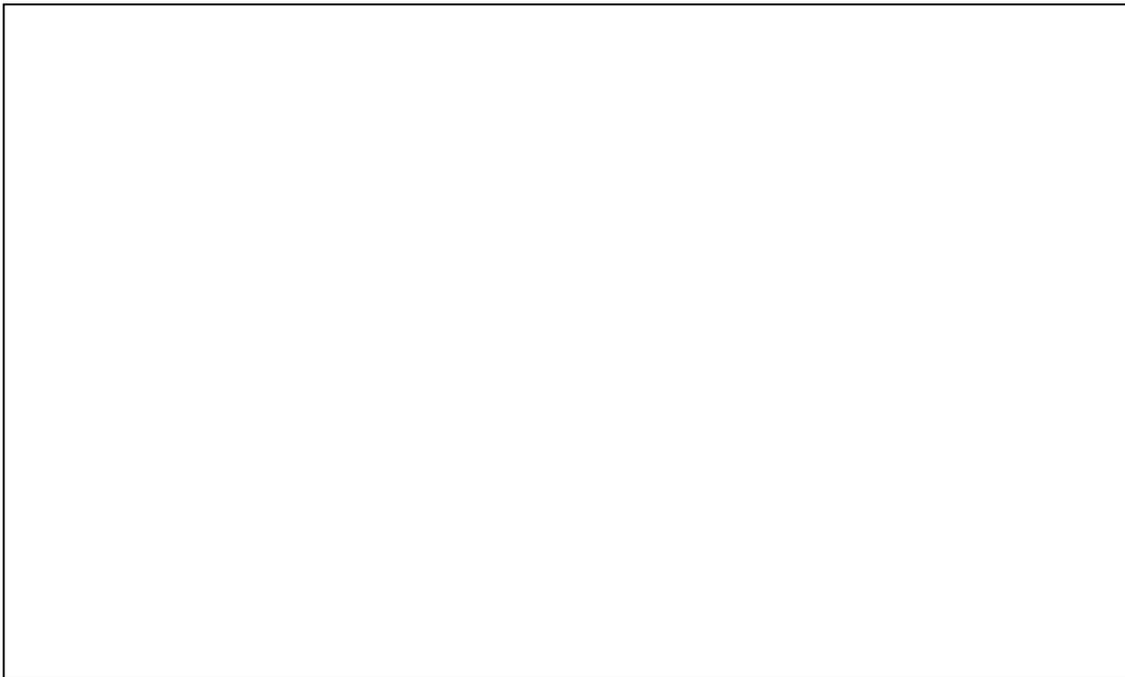
NAME _____

Ceramic Arts 1
Bonner

Cultural Mask Research Information

For this aspect of the assignment you will need to research a particular culture and their mask making techniques and purposes. **This project is not a popular cultural mask—ie movies or cartoons this is a cultural mask specific to a group of people or nation.** After surveying a few cultures of interest on the internet, you need to make some decisions: will your mask be human or animal, realistic or abstract? How will I include these unique visual links into my mask? Preparatory drawings will also be needed. You need to respond to these questions in thoughtful and complete sentences. **Include research papers with your Grading Sheet.**

1. Which culture are you focusing on and why?
2. What makes this culture interesting or unique?
3. What is their tradition with mask making? (Why do they make masks? materials and purposes)
4. What types of colors are typically used?
5. Describe the types of texture that are typically used within their mask making tradition (for example: carving, sprigging, patterns, attached elements?)
6. How will you incorporate your chosen cultures unique qualities into your mask? (Be specific) Use your drawing to show your ideas if necessary.



Full Face/ frontal view of mask

****Remember to print out pictures of your mask and other cultural examples that support your claims and use as reference****

For the Advanced 1 and 2 students, I chose to elaborate on a project that was already in existence. Originally the project was entitled “Traditions

of Europe,” but I have now expanded its scope to include Asia and South East Asia. I direct my Advanced students to a variety of sources, books and online materials, and now I have included binders containing all photographs of ceramics from my Fulbright experience. I have two binders, one for each country containing pictures of ancient ceramics and sculptures from museums and ceramic works of contemporary artists. Students have used these binders as a resource for their own work.

TRADITIONS OF EUROPE AND ASIA

A wide variety of forms and styles might be used for this problem. You need to do some research on pottery from Europe (including Egypt and the Middle East) or Asia (Japan, China and Korea) or South East Asia (Thailand, Cambodia or Vietnam).

1. 8” Minimum (in any dimension)
2. Shape and decoration must be derived from Greek Chinese/Japanese/Korean/ Thai/ Vietnamese or Islamic examples. Research documented- sources and drawings
3. Decoration technique should be appropriate for culture chosen
4. Smooth Glazed Interior
5. Well- attached handles and lugs
6. No Cracks
7. Even or regular rim, edges rounded to prevent glaze parting (crawling)
8. Clean even glaze line
9. Must be drawn on completed grading sheet and approved by instructor before starting. Drawings must include both shape and decoration plans.

For Thailand ceramics, I emphasize the historic Benchraong Ware because in addition to photographs, students can see the real item in my room. Even though we cannot replicate the colors of this piece, students can see the craftsmanship and labor involved. They have access to study the shape, see the vivid colors and feel the thin and light construction of the piece and they can take bits of information into their own works.



Benchraong ware for sale at the JJ market

www.siambenjarong.com

If students are interested in a more contemporary view of Thai ceramics I will introduce master potter Somluk Pantiboon. Our group was lucky enough to view his work and studio in Chiang Rai and talk with the



Somluk applying glaze with a bamboo brush

artist himself. Doy Din Dang is a studio that focuses on wheel thrown functional stoneware pieces. Somluk also teaches the local villagers how to throw on the wheel, glaze and fire ceramics. What I thought was particularly interesting was that the glazes were natural derived from wood, bamboo, ash, rice stalks, leaves and clay. I purchased many examples for the classroom for students to study shape and form, but also to see that modern ceramic forms are still created even in seemingly 'remote' areas. I have included a segment of pictures of his studio and work for students to study and incorporate into their own work. www.dddpottery.com

For Vietnamese ceramics, I show my students examples from the Ceramic Village of Bat Trang just outside of Hanoi. The history of this village and their work with ceramics can be traced back to the 13th century. What is unique about Bat Trang ceramics are its crackle glaze and fine glaze, with colors such as celadon greens, magenta reds and browns, and cobalt blues against a white porcelain background. Students can examine the wide array of examples that I purchased from Bat Trang. They can attempt to reproduce a work from Bat Trang or include a design element into their ceramics.

<http://www.gomsubattrang.com/battrang.htm>

In addition to creating new projects, I shared my pictures, artifacts and stories with my fellow art teachers at the Douglas High School. Our 2-D and sculpture teacher received a sculpted dragon out of a rubber tree from Vietnam. I shared pictures of the artist himself at work. He was amazed at the detailed carving of the dragon and the tools employed by the



Local artist carving rubber trees

artist. I also gave him pictures of Thai paintings and sculpture from The Grand Palace and Temple of the Emerald Buddha to refer to in class. He was particularly interested in the Thai shadow puppets, their construction and vibrant colors. All of these images and artifacts will be used in his classes as resources for students to develop their artwork and perceptions of cultures that differ from their own.

Our other art instructor teaches *Introduction to Art*, a beginning art class, mainly directed at our freshman population at Douglas High School. This class offers an Art History unit covering art periods Pre-Historic to Greek. My hope is to augment the students' exposure to art of the world and more specifically, South East Asia. I included pictures of Thai architecture, pointing out key components such as wat, chofa and stupa. Introduction to Art integrates art periods with construction, for example during the basket unit, students study the history of basketry before completing a basket of their own. I have examples of basketry from both Thailand and Vietnam to help expand this unit for our students. At my fellow art teacher's request I purchased a large batik for her unit on cloth dying and I shared our experiences at the Kiriwong Village where we learned how to fold and dye cloth using the mangosteen fruit.



Folding fabric with sticks and rubber bands. Mangosteen fruit used to dye fabric

The following are the quality standards for the batik project. This project could be modified for folding and dying fabric as well.

1. Printed example—color
2. Personal sketch in sketchbook
3. Flower or appropriate foliage
4. Composition, balance and line

5. Color Scheme (3 Colors) Monochromatic, Analogous, primary, secondary

Our beadwork unit in crafts focused on Native American examples of beading, but now, I also include examples of beadwork from Thailand and Vietnam, which are both distinctive. My Thai example of beadwork is from the women's correctional facility where artwork is used as rehabilitation. It is a beautiful contemporary necklace, bracelet and earring set. From Vietnam, I purchased a purse that is entirely hand beaded with a floral design. Both objects are fine examples of varying uses for beads. Students could chose to recreate one of these pieces or take a Thai pattern and translate that to loom beadwork. Once again, the aim is to expand my students' perceptions of cultures and their art.

Loom Beading

For this project we will investigate one of the simplest forms of beadwork, loom beading. You will have handouts of some Native American and Thai beading patterns. Your first attempt at beading needs to have a repeating pattern. Keep your first attempt simple then you can "update" your pattern in order to make it more complex. You have a minimum of 7 beads across you may have more but do not exceed 13 beads across. Once you have established a pattern (3 colors) on the computer print out in color. (limit to one) we will spend 1.5 class hours in the library. We will create a loom out of matt board and use nylon string for the Warp. Your warp needs to be taut but not too tight.

Website for library

www.nativetech.org/beadwork/beadgraph/index.html

www.coloursblog.com/vectorial-mix/thai-patterns/

www.mu3i.deviantart.com/art/33-Thai-Patterns-50102667

Terms

Loom

Weft (goes weft and right)

Hank

Warp

Weft

Beeswax

Seed bead size 10

Bead tapering

Warp (goes up and down)

Quality Standards

1. Drawing/ printout of pattern—must be Native or Thai inspired
2. Complexity of pattern
3. 3 color minimum representing a color group
4. Traditional pattern that repeats
5. 7 bead across minimum
6. 2 bead strips 4 inch in length minimum
7. bead strips that lay flat—no gaps
8. even tension throughout
9. Secure starting and ending

These projects are just a few examples of what I will accomplish this year in the classroom. I have also shared my resources and information with my fellow art teachers and they plan to use these materials as a resource to expand their offerings and information. This experience has allowed me an enhanced ability to create interesting art lessons for a student body that sometimes feels out of touch with the larger world. It will provide a better understanding of a world and culture that seems strangely different. At the same time my hope is to create ideas that tie all people and cultures together.

The image to the right is the display space directly outside my classroom. I used this area to focus on the art of Thailand and Vietnam. The bottom shelf highlights the art of Thai ceramics, fan painting, paper making, sculpture paper and metal and beadwork. The middle shelf displays the art of Vietnamese ceramics, needle work, beading and calligraphy brushes. And the very top shelf displays examples from Doy Din Dang Pottery and Somluk Pantiboon's book. During the first week of school I showed a powerpoint about my trip. The entire hour was dedicated to the art and culture of these two countries. Surprisingly, my students were



interested in my travels. They were inquisitive about the monks of Thailand and how life was lived in modern day Vietnam. During this presentation, I took the artwork out of the displays and students were allowed to handle and ask questions about each object. They tried on the Vietnamese hats, touched a statue of Buddha, and were allowed to handle ceramics and closely look at details that are difficult to be viewed in a textbook.

The following images are the displays that I arranged by the community library at our high school. One side was dedicated to Thai culture and information and the other side contained Vietnamese cultural artifacts. Viewers could see information about these countries side by side and make their own comparisons and contrasts. A few of the geography teachers have taken their classes out to view these displays and talk about the countries and their cultures.

Articles included in the Thailand display are: Jim Thompson silk elephants, images of Buddha, Thai currency featuring the King, pictures of the wai greeting, fans, a temple bell, mask and books. The most commented item was the Thai coke bottle, students could easily make a connection and many were surprised to see that Thais drink coke. Amulets, a statue of a Buddha hand and pictures of monks also generated student questions. I used Thai newspapers on the bottom of the display so viewers could see Thai script.



In the display for Vietnam, I chose to highlight the Cu Chi tunnels and the War Remenant Museum. I also included the traditional Vietnamese hat, dragon imagery and currency featuring Ho Chi Min. Many students have some knowledge about the Vietnam conflict and were



very interested in the Cu Chi tunnels. Coffee and lotus tea were displayed. A few students commented about how Vietnamese images reminded them of China, especially the dragons. They also felt that the ceramics were Chinese inspired and the connection was made that Vietnam and China had a shared history. I also used Vietnamese newspapers to line the bottom of the showcase so students could see Vietnamese writing.

Some of my students feel isolated living in South Dakota, and I feel it is my duty to show them our global society through the arts. Now I can give my students an introduction to Thai and Vietnamese arts because my understanding of these countries' arts, history and religion was greatly augmented by my travels in Southeast Asia. Our art department has benefited by my addition of new artistic methods and specific historical units into our art curriculum guide. Our school has benefited as I have generated meaningful art lessons for our students and have offered cross-curricular presentation opportunities with the Social Studies departments. And most important our students and local population have benefited because they can now make a connection with other countries that, at first seemed so foreign from their own.