

Clay Chess Set

Objective: Create a series of small ceramic sculptures that create a full chess set.

Grade Level		Medium	Making Connections	Elements & Principles	National Standards
K-2	3-5		The Lewis Chessmen Social Studies	Form Unity	VA:Cr2.1.IIIa
MS	HS				VA:Re7.1.IIIa VA:Cn10.1.IIIa



Materials

- Sketch Paper
- Clay
- Clay Tools
- Glaze

Introductory Activities

- Discuss the history of the game of chess and how the game is played.
- Have students play the game in partners using real board games or a computer program. Even twenty minutes will increase motivation.
- Share sculptural chess set examples.
- Have students decide on themes for their sets based on their interests.

1 Brainstorm and Sketch

After deciding on a theme, students should create a detailed plan of their chess set. It will be beneficial for students to sketch each piece before they begin working on the set. Graphic organizers that depict each piece work well to help students organize their designs.

2 Construct

To ensure success, teachers should determine a size range that students need to work within and communicate those parameters as needed. Students will have better luck creating a uniform set if they create all of the like pieces (both kings or all pawns, for example) in one sitting. Doing so also provides a great time management challenge.

3 Glaze, Fire, and Play

Students can glaze pieces as they complete them or glaze them all at once. Keeping a detailed, written log of both the glazes used plus application information (dipped, brushed, sponged, etc.) will help ensure uniformity in the set. Inexpensive makeshift chess boards can be created, printed, and laminated to use upon completion.



Insider Tips

- This is a marathon project, but it ensures that there is always something to work on.
- Make sure to devote some class time to playing with the sets once they're complete.