Coiled Clay Creatures

Objective: Create a hand-built coil vessel incorporating a creature/animal.

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Materials
- Clay
- Clay Tools
- Slip
- Glaze

Introductory Activities
- Start your students with a brief history of Japanese Jōmon Pottery.
- Demonstrate and review basic clay techniques: rolling a coil, creating a slab, slipping and scoring, etc.
- Have students plan and create a sketch of their clay vessel.

1 Create Base and Add Coils
Using a rolling pin or slab roller, roll a slab for the base. Use a stencil to trace the desired shape of the slab. Begin rolling coils and attach them to the base by slipping and scoring. Continue rolling coils and attaching them until the desired height and shape are met.

2 Add Creature Details
After coils are attached and the vessel has reached the desired height, create details for the creature. Students can use various hand-building techniques to create a creature. Pinch pots, coils, slabs, and carving are all great techniques to explore. Attach any additional features to the vessel by slipping and scoring.

3 Add Color
After the clay has been bisque fired, allow students to add color by glazing, staining, or painting the vessel. Encourage students to use a variety of colors to show off the details.

Insider Tips
- Use a serrated rib, fork, or plastic knife to scrape and even out the coils before smoothing.
- Challenge students to incorporate the creature into the shape of the vessel instead of just adding details to a basic form.