



Dreaming Clay Sculpture
Inspired by the



Visual Art Concepts

Form
Texture
Modeling

Materials

Flour, salt, vegetable oil, water
Bowl, mixing spoon
Plastic utensils
Cardboard for a base
Paint, hot glue (optional)

Artist Inspiration:

Elizabeth Catlett (April 15, 1915 - April 2, 2012)

“I wanted to show the history and strength of all kinds of black women, working women, country women, urban women, great women in the history of the United States.”

Elizabeth Catlett was an African American sculptor and graphic artist best known for her artwork showing the African American female experience. Her work is a mix of abstract and figurative (i.e., coming from real object sources). She used a clay coil technique for her sculptures. Elizabeth Catlett believed that making artworks about ordinary people could be powerful politically. She devoted most of her career to teaching and was the first African American woman to receive a master’s degree in fine art.

STEPS

1. Decide on the expression of the face of the head form you will be making from clay. Think about how the facial expression will send a message and sketch. In the example, the expression is peaceful, dreaming of better times to come. The example is a relief sculpture; relief sculptures are flat on one side.



2. In a large bowl, mix together two cups flour and one cup salt. Add two tablespoons vegetable oil. Slowly add one cup water as you stir. Stir until you have the consistency of clay.
3. Put the clay mixture out on a table and form your sculpture. As you work, moisten your fingers if clay becomes sticky. Use plastic utensils for incising lines and pushing in to create facial features.
4. Set your sculpture out to dry or bake in an oven at 250 degrees until hardened- check every 10-15 minutes.
5. If desired, paint your sculpture and attach to a piece of cardboard for display.

Resources:

- <https://kids.britannica.com/students/article/Elizabeth-Catlett/310606>
- <https://whitney.org/collection/works/44134>