

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Exploring Culture Through Food



Food traditions are an important part of growing up and an important part of learning about different cultures and families. Students can make a display of food traditions either from another culture, another part of the world, or from their own lives. These Trompe L'oeil pieces will look good enough to eat!

## Lesson Plan Goals and Objectives

- Students will research and explore cultures and the variety of foods the world has to offer.
- Students will create Trompe L'oeil forms using design skills, slab, coil, pinch, textures and underglazes.
- This lesson combines social studies and history with a contemporary art practice.

## National Visual Art and Core Standards

- Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and culture.
- Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes.
- Students will reflect upon and assess characteristics and merits of their artwork and the work of others.

## Background Preparation

**1.** Ask students about food traditions in their own family. Perhaps there is a special food that is eaten at holidays or family gatherings, or perhaps just a favorite weekly meal. Students might talk to family members about the origins or memories associated with a special food. Did family members come from a part of the world where that was a tradition? Is it associated with a special time of year or a specific holiday? Research might give more insight into the origins as well as the way it is made.

**2.** Alternately, students can research foods of a different part of the world, or a culture that is new or interesting to them. There are many books, both for children and adults, with lots of great recipes and photos of foods around the world.

**3.** Trompe L'oeil is a term for making an artwork that is so realistic that it "fools the eye", encourage students to make something look as realistic as possible. Students should be encouraged to research Trompe L'oeil ceramic artists such as Betty Spindler, Victor Spinski, and Richard Shaw.



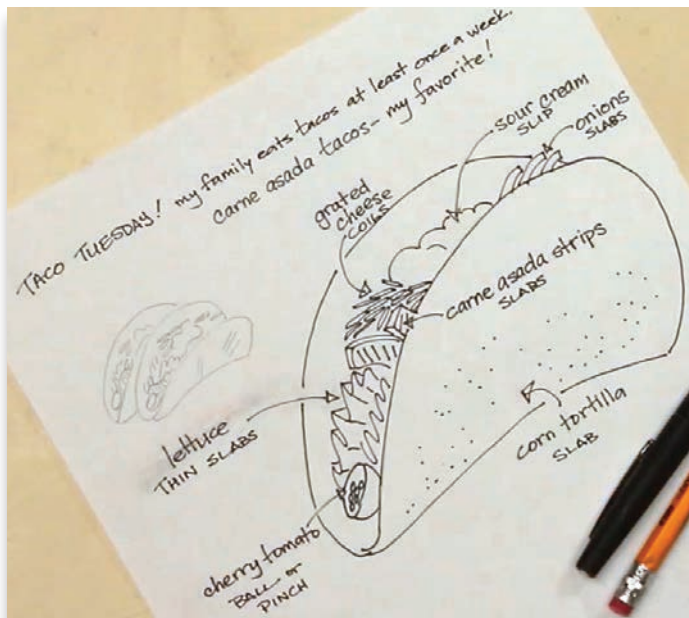
## Tools & Materials

- AMACO® Versa Clay No. 20 (45030R), about 2 to 5 pounds per student
- AMACO® Velvet Underglazes
- AMACO® Teacher's Palette Glazes
- AMACO® Hardwood Modeling Tools (various)
- AMACO® Fettling Knife (11192H)
- AMACO® Potter's Needle Tool (11016M)
- AMACO® Hardwood Rolling Pin (11196M) or brent® Slab Roller
- AMACO® Hardwood Thickness Strips (11190F)
- AMACO® Glaze Brushes
- Sketchbook or paper, soft pencils—one per student
- Mixing palettes or plastic trays for mixing
- Plastic spoons or palette knives



"Sundae"  
by Betty Spindler

## Instructions



**1.** Have students decide upon a food or meal they want to recreate in clay. Use photos or drawings as a source and plan.



**4.** Loosely fold and squeeze together thin slabs to resemble lettuce.



**2.** Any method of clay forming can be used, but remind students that anything thicker than  $\frac{3}{4}$ " should be hollow or punched with a needle tool to prevent blow-ups in the kiln.



**5.** Use tools to recreate texture. Here a stylus makes small marks to resemble seeds of a cut tomato.



**3.** Cookie cutters make great templates for tortillas.



**6.** Grated cheese can be made by rolling out thin coils.



**7.** The taco! Clay slip can be used to stick components together, or to mimic sauce.



**8.** Decorate with AMACO® Velvets or LUG underglazes, then fire to Cone 05.



**OPTION:** If you prefer to decorate with glazes, the piece must first be bisque fired at Cone 04. Apply 1 to 3 coats of glaze then glaze fire at Cone 05. Pieces shown were decorated with AMACO® Teacher's Palette glazes.

## Glossary

**Bisque:** Unglazed ceramic after the first firing.

**Bone Dry:** Final stage of greenware, completely dry and ready to be fired. At this stage clay is very fragile, non-plastic, and porous.

**Fire:** To heat the clay in a kiln at a very high temperature until it is hard and becomes ceramic.

**Greenware:** Any unfired piece of clay.

**Score:** Scratching the surface in preparation for joining.

**Slip:** Clay mixed with water to a creamy consistency, often used to attach raw clay.

## Resources

Dodge, Abigail Johnson, *Around the World Cookbook*, 2008, DK Publishing

Goulding, Sylvia, *Festive Foods! China*, 2008, Chelsea Clubhouse

Kalman, Bobbie, *Multicultural Meals*, 2004, Crabtree Publishing Co.

Park, Peggy, *Foods of France*, 2006, Kidhaven Press

Sheen, Barbara, *Foods of Afghanistan*, 2011, Kidhaven Press  
*Foods of Brazil*, 2008  
*Foods of Israel*, 2011  
*Foods of Poland*, 2012

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