



Objective: To expose the children to sculpture and teach them that sculpture can be carved, modeled, or molded.

****If you have a cake or Jello mold bring it as an example to show the class. If you have any three-dimensional examples of carved, modeled or molded sculpture at home, the children would enjoy seeing these too.**

A) Introduction:

Today we will be exploring sculpture in the round, as an artist creates a work of art that can be viewed from all sides.

(If the vocabulary words have been provided on poster boards, refer to them here. Otherwise, write the words on the board before you start the discussion on vocabulary)

B) Vocabulary:

- **Sculpture in the round:** Art that can be viewed from all sides. The artist needs to make all views interesting, including the top. Does anyone remember what an artist who makes sculpture is called? (**Sculptor**)
- **Carved:** To cut away material into a desired shape or form. Carving is a process in which you start with something big and take parts away. What kind of materials could you start with if you were going to carve a sculpture? (Make sure they include wood, stone, and bones such as ivory)
- **Modeling:** To make a sculpture by shaping a material such as clay. Modeling is a process where you shape a soft substance into a sculpture. What kind of materials can you model with? Clay is a common one. Artists can take a clay sculpture and fire it. That means they bake it into a very hot oven to make it hard. What other kinds of modeling materials can you think of? (Playdough, snow, etc) Artists also use wax and plastic substances.
- **Fire:** The hardening process of baking clay in a kiln. Which kind of sculpture do you think would last the longest, one carved of wood or stone or one modeled from clay and fired? The clay sculpture could easily break, couldn't it? The wooden sculpture would last longer but it might be eaten by bugs or deteriorate in the weather. The stone sculpture would probably last the longest
- **Mold:** A form (a cavity) that may be used to create the same shape over and over again. Sometimes sculptors want to make a sculpture that will last a long time but they don't want to spend the time it would take to carve it. Carving takes a long, long time and modeling is much quicker. One solution is to make a mold. Do any of you know what a mold is? (A hollow form into which a soft or liquid material is put. When the material hardens, it takes the shape of the mold). Some kinds of molds are common in our everyday lives. For example, can you think of some molds that are used in the kitchen? (Layer cake or bundt cake baking pans, Jell-O molds, etc) Show the example you've brought. When you take the food out of the mold, it is in the shape of the mold, isn't it?



Let's look at some pictures of sculptures and discuss how they were made.

C) Artwork

Title: *Dancing Ganesha*, India, 10th Century

Details: Stone Carving

- This stone carving, found in Uttar Pradesh India, depicts one of the many gods central to the Hindu faith. The dancing, elephant-headed creature called Ganesha is Hinduism's Lord of Beginnings and Remover of Obstacles. The prayer to a Ganesha occurs when one begins something new or when they want assistance in overcoming obstacles.
- What does the Ganesha look like he is doing? (Dancing)
- Do you think the Ganesha is having a good time?
- As the story goes the Ganesha was created to guard the door of his mother, Nandi. When his Nandi bathed he was instructed to let no one enter. Ganesha was so loyal to his mother that when his own father, Shiva, wanted to enter he wouldn't let him through the doorway.
- The Ganesha was very powerful and Shiva could not overcome him to enter into the doorway. This made Shiva extremely upset and the only way he could enter was to destroy Ganesha by severing its head from its body. Unfortunately this killed the Ganesha and his mother, Nandi, became so angry that her Ganesha was gone and demanded he be brought back and forever worshipped.
- Shiva realized he has made a huge mistake and he used the first animal head he could find and reattached it to the body. Once he gave new life to this being he declared him a status among the gods and a leader of all ganas.

Title: *Storyteller Figure*, Mexico, 100BCE – 250 BCE

Details: Modeled Sculpture

- This figure was found in a tomb that dates from an ancient culture in West Mexico. The figure would have been one of the many ceramic objects, both beautiful and useful, that were put in a burial chamber to aid the deceased person's journey between life and the afterlife.
- Does this piece look like it was carved or modeled?
- The head and body were coated with a watery mixture of potter's clay called a slip to add the dark red color, and then the figure was fired. The black patches on the head, fingers and legs are a result of the firing process.
- Storytellers were very important in ancient cultures. They pass on the stories, both real and imagined, that explained the people's history and place in the world. We don't know why this figure was put into the tomb, but perhaps it was to help carry those stories into the afterlife.



Reinforcement Activity

Materials provided: clay, matte board, paper towels

Today, the children are going to make clay sculptures. Have them model their clay into any form they like. Remind them of the vocabulary words and how they apply to what they are doing. The children can set their sculptures on a small piece of matte board and put them in the plastic bag



Additional Background Material:

This material is provided to give you, the discussion leader, additional information about the artists and paintings that may help you answer questions or generate additional discussion with the children if time permits. You are not expected or required to cover this information in the classroom.

India, *Dancing Ganesha*, 10th Century

Like most Hindu gods and goddesses, Ganesha has multiple arms which indicate his supernatural power and cosmic nature. In some of his hands he has an “attribute” – an object symbolizing his personality or personal history. In one hand he has bowl of candy or radishes, both of which he is very fond, hence his round belly. Another hand is making the “mudra” gesture symbolizing power and self-assurance. In yet another hand, he grasps a large axe. As remover of all obstacles, the axe clears barriers from his path. Above his head, Ganesha holds a snake. In one story, a snake had frightened the rat upon which Ganesha rode for transportation, dumping him on the ground, splitting his stomach open and spilling its contents of sweetmeats. Ganesha summarily scooped the sweetmeats back into his stomach and knotted the snake around his stomach to hold it together. The moon seeing this incident from the sky, laughed at Ganesha, who then snapped off his tusk and hurled it in fury. In this image Ganesha is shown holding the snake high over his head sporting one broken tusk. Also note the third eye. All spiritual beings have three eyes, two for seeing the physical world and one for spiritual sight.

Mexico, West Central Region, “*Storyteller*” Figure, 100 BC – 250 BC

Doris“West Mexico has long been recognized as a region of shaft tombs and beautiful ceramic sculptures – both of which were manifestations of a reverence of ancestors and belief in the afterlife,” a scholar wrote recently. Ceramic pieces found in the shaft tombs have been thought of as works of funerary art and functional pieces that aid in the transition between life and afterlife. This particular ceramic piece, the “Storyteller” Figure, was excavated from such a tomb in Jalisco. The technology of the West Mexican people was quite basic, not much beyond that of the Stone Age, except in terms of workmanship in gold and silver. Despite their limited tools, these cultures produced art forms of complexity and sophistication and their thought processes were highly developed. The “Storyteller” Figure is made of a modeled clay material and partially covered with a deep, brick red colored slip (potter’s clay thinned with water used for decorating or coating ceramics). The piece’s surface is polished, and a few black patches caused by the firing process are visible on the head, fingers, and legs. “Storyteller” Figure has been named so because of the position of the man. He seems to be in the midst of telling a story, and although no definite description of the piece has been uncovered, he seems to visually represent a timeless recounting of history, legends, and myths.