



Ceramics II Curriculum

Board Approved: 02/19/2026

Course Information

High School Semester Course

Prerequisite(s): Introduction to Art, Ceramics I

Course Description:

Ceramics II is an advanced studio course that deepens students' technical and conceptual abilities through expanded hand-building, surface design, and introductory wheel-throwing. Students develop original works that reflect personal themes, symbolism, and cultural or environmental connections. With increased independence, students create multi-piece series, experiment with complex techniques, and engage in sophisticated critique and portfolio curation. This course emphasizes artistic voice, thematic development, and the integration of advanced ceramic processes.

Transfer Goals:

- Apply advanced ceramic processes, including wheel throwing and complex hand-building.
- Create multi-piece artworks demonstrating thematic coherence.
- Independently refine work using critique, research, and iteration.
- Develop a personal artistic voice through symbolic, conceptual, and expressive ceramic work.
- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.
- Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.
- Refine and complete artistic work.
- Analyze, interpret, and select artistic work for presentation.
- Develop and refine artistic work for presentation.
- Convey meaning through the presentation of artistic work.
- Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Apply criteria to evaluate artistic work.
- Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.
- Explore how art is influenced by the people and time in which it was created.

Curriculum Standards: [Missouri Learning Standards Fine Arts Visual Arts Standards](#)

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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Curriculum Resource(s): *Experience Clay*, by Maureen Mackey. Davis Publications. Additional Resources TBD

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 1: The Natural World

Timeframe: 7 weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students will explore the deep connection between the natural world and human nature through the expressive possibilities of clay. Drawing inspiration from a variety of sources, students will investigate how ceramic art can reflect both external landscapes and internal experiences. Through sketchbook planning, experimentation with texture and surface, and intentional form development, students will create meaningful ceramic artworks that combine personal vision with broader themes.

Enduring Understandings:

- The natural world can inspire both the formal qualities (shape, texture, pattern) and the conceptual meaning of ceramic artworks.
- Artists can reflect human experiences, emotions, and relationships with the environment through intentional choices in clay form and surface design.
- Natural elements—plants, animals, landscapes—can serve as symbols to communicate personal, cultural, or universal narratives.
- Translating textures, patterns, and materials from the natural world into ceramic surfaces allows artists to create visually and tactilely expressive work.
- Ceramic art can be a tool for reflection and dialogue about humanity's impact on, and connection to, the environment.
- Combining human and natural forms in clay can deepen exploration of identity, emotion, and broader societal or ecological themes.
- Organic shapes, patterns, and motifs in ceramics can evoke emotions, memories, and ideas, making abstract or symbolic storytelling tangible.

Essential Questions:

- How can the natural world inspire the forms, textures, and meanings in my ceramic artwork?
- In what ways do humans reflect, impact, or belong to the environment, and how can I express that relationship through clay?
- How can natural elements—such as plants, animals, or landscapes—symbolize personal experiences, emotions, or ideas?
- How can I translate textures, patterns, or materials found in nature into ceramic surfaces and forms?
- What role can ceramic art play in encouraging reflection on humanity's relationship with the natural world?
- How can I use clay to convey the beauty, power, or fragility of nature?
- In what ways do natural forms, textures, and patterns influence artistic design and storytelling?
- How can I combine human and natural forms to explore deeper personal or universal narratives?
- What emotions, memories, or ideas can I communicate through organic shapes, patterns, or motifs?
- How can advanced ceramic processes expand the possibilities for communicating complex ideas?

Unit 1 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
VA:Cr1A.11la	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can imagine and plan how to create art and design that can make a difference in society. • I can make mind maps and quick sketches to plan artworks that express ideas

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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	about social and cultural change.
VA:Cr1B.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can use my sketchbook to research art styles, periods, and techniques. ● I can use my sketchbook to document, record, and plan my artwork. ● I can use a variety of materials and methods to make an artwork. ● I can choose materials to create an artwork based on a theme, idea, or concept.
VA:Cr2A.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can choose a theme that means a lot to me and make a ceramic piece about it. ● I can use the design process to plan, test out ideas, and create multiple pieces of art. ● I can experiment with different techniques and materials to see what works best for my theme. ● I can make a plan for my artwork in my sketchbook by including elements that are personally significant to me. ● I can show what I've learned about ceramic processes by making multiple artworks. ● I can explore multiple ceramics processes to find out how they can help me convey my ideas or concepts.
VA:Cr2B.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can create a ceramic piece that is inspired by others' ideas and imagery, yet uniquely my own. ● I can design and make original artworks using my own sources like personal photos or things I observe.
VA:Cr3A.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can think about, improve, and refine my artworks or designs, using both traditional and modern standards, as well as my own artistic vision. ● I can assess both my own work and that of others using different criteria. ● I can give feedback, speaking or writing, about what works and what doesn't work in someone's art, using evidence from the artwork itself. ● I can think about why I used certain techniques, why I designed the image the way I did, and which artists inspired me, to improve my artworks.
VA:Pr4A.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can select artworks that best demonstrate my skills, creativity, and growth throughout the unit. ● I can reflect on how my choices in the creative process helped me express my thoughts and feelings in my artwork. ● I can share my own artwork with others during critiques and in my portfolio. ● I can listen attentively to feedback and suggestions about my artwork from my peers and teacher. ● I can ask questions and seek clarification about the feedback I receive during critiques. ● I can choose artwork that I feel best represents my skills and personal style for a portfolio, exhibit, or event.
VA:Re9A.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can judge a piece of art or a group of artworks using different standards. ● I can look at various standards used to judge art. ● I can pick criteria to judge artworks. ● I can judge artworks, whether my own or others', using specific criteria.
VA:Cn10A.111a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can create a ceramic work(s) that has personal meaning.

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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- | | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• I can create a concept for a ceramic piece(s) that ties to my personal connections.• I can use my sketchbook to keep a record of my thinking and artistic journey. |
|--|---|

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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Unit 2: Dreams & Fantasy

Timeframe: 7 weeks

Unit Description: In this unit, students will step beyond the boundaries of reality to explore the surreal, the symbolic, and the fantastical through clay. Students take creative risks, design original characters or symbolic objects, and refine expressive surfaces through advanced techniques. This unit encourages students to invent characters, creatures, places, and symbolic forms that tell stories. Emphasis is placed on conceptual thinking, symbolic meaning, and craftsmanship in bringing abstract ideas into tangible sculptural forms. Students will use their sketchbooks to brainstorm, plan, and reflect—sketching imagined forms, experimenting with expressive textures and shapes, and considering how to bring abstract ideas to life in three dimensional forms.

Enduring Understandings:

- Clay can serve as a versatile medium for translating imagination, subconscious thoughts, and dreamlike visions into tangible forms.
- Symbols, invented creatures, and fantastical elements allow artists to communicate complex personal ideas, emotions, and narratives without relying on literal representation.
- Surreal and fantastical imagery in art can reveal deeper meanings, provoke thought, and evoke emotion beyond what is immediately visible.
- The process of creating fantasy-inspired art fosters storytelling, self-expression, and symbolic thinking, connecting personal imagination to artistic form.
- Abstract, emotional, or imaginary concepts can be transformed into meaningful three-dimensional artworks through intentional exploration of shape, texture, and surface design.
- Experimentation with materials, techniques, and design choices in ceramics can enhance expression and expand the possibilities of fantastical and dreamlike ideas.
- Taking creative risks in art-making encourages discovery, innovation, and new perspectives on one's own ideas and imagination.

Essential Questions:

- How can clay become a tool to explore and visualize my imagination, dreams, or subconscious thoughts?
- In what ways can symbols, fantastical creatures, or invented forms communicate personal ideas, emotions, or stories?
- How can surreal and fantastical elements in art reveal deeper meanings beyond literal representation?
- What can the process of creating fantasy-inspired art teach me about storytelling, symbolism, and self-expression?
- How do I translate abstract, emotional, or imaginary concepts into tangible, three-dimensional forms?
- How can experimenting with texture, shape, and surface design enhance the expression of fantastical or dreamlike ideas?
- In what ways does taking creative risks in ceramics lead to unexpected discoveries or new ways of seeing my own ideas?

Unit 2 Standards

**STANDARD
CODE**

STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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VA:Cr1B.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can use my sketchbook to research art styles, periods, and techniques. ● I can use my sketchbook to document, record, and plan my artwork. ● I can use a variety of materials and methods to make an artwork. ● I can choose materials to create an artwork based on a theme, idea, or concept.
VA:Cr2A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can choose a theme that means a lot to me and make a series of ceramic works about it. ● I can use the design process to plan, test out ideas, and create multiple pieces of art. ● I can experiment with different techniques and materials to see what works best for my theme. ● I can make a plan for my artwork in my sketchbook by including elements that are personally significant to me. ● I can show what I've learned about ceramics by making multiple artworks. ● I can explore multiple ceramics processes to find out how they can help me convey my ideas or concepts.
VA:Cr2B.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can create a ceramic piece(s) that is inspired by others' ideas and imagery, yet uniquely my own. ● I can design and make original artworks using my own sources like personal photos or things I observe.
VA:Cr2C.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can use visual symbols to enhance the content of my work. ● I can look at art and design, also processes and places, and consider how it could change to fit into today's needs. ● I can create artwork and write an artist statement that makes connections to our visual culture.
VA:Cr3A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can think about, improve, and refine my artworks or designs, using both traditional and modern standards, as well as my own artistic vision. ● I can assess both my own work and that of others using different criteria. ● I can give feedback, speaking or writing, about what works and what doesn't in someone's art, using evidence from the artwork itself. ● I can think about why I used certain techniques, why I designed the image the way I did, and which artists inspired me, to improve my artworks.
VA:Pr4A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can select artworks that best demonstrate my skills, creativity, and growth throughout the unit. ● I can reflect on how my choices in the creative process helped me express my thoughts and feelings in my artwork. ● I can share my own artwork with others during critiques. ● I can listen attentively to feedback and suggestions about my artwork from my peers and teacher. ● I can ask questions and seek clarification about the feedback I receive during critiques. ● I can choose artwork that I feel best represents my skills and personal style for a portfolio, exhibit, or event.
VA:Pr5A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can research different methods used to preserve and protect artwork from deterioration and damage. ● I can identify and select appropriate materials and techniques to safeguard my

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	artwork during display.
VA:Pr6A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can organize objects, artifacts, or artwork to help people understand social, cultural, or political experiences better. • I can organize a display of my art by choosing which pieces from my portfolio to include. • I can study my own artwork and that of my peers, considering how to express meaning and provoke reactions through the way the artwork is displayed.
VA:Re7A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze how art develops over time based on knowledge and experience. • I can evaluate how we respond to art and how our life experiences affect artistic work and what we find appealing.
VA:Re7B.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can understand how the cultural background and historical context influence the creation of artworks within a specific culture or time period. • I can recognize patterns or trends in the styles, techniques, or subject matter used by these artists. • I can explain the concept of intertextuality and how it relates to the connections between different texts or artworks.
VA:Re8A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can analyze various interpretations of artworks, considering factors like personal experiences and cultural context, to develop an understanding of their meaning. • I can support my analysis of artworks with textual evidence from reputable sources, constructing well-reasoned arguments that contribute to a deeper appreciation of the artwork. • I can analyze artwork(s) by identifying significant elements, exploring their relationships to each other and the whole, and identifying patterns to understand the artwork's meaning and significance. • I can pose questions about the artwork(s) and provide solutions supported by evidence, demonstrating a deep understanding of why the artwork is as it is and how it conveys meaning. • I can analyze my work in my artist statement. • I can write about my artwork, explaining why I made it, what inspired me, and how I made it. • I can talk about what my artwork means, why it's important to me, and how I created it.
VA:Re9A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can judge a piece of art or a group of artworks using different standards. • I can look at various standards used to judge art. • I can pick criteria to judge artworks. • I can judge artworks, whether my own or others', using specific criteria.
VA:Cn10A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can create a ceramic artwork that has personal meaning. • I can create a concept for a ceramic piece(s) that ties to my personal connections. • I can use my sketchbook to keep a record of my thinking and artistic journey.
VA:Cn11A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can assess how an artist or group of artists influence the beliefs, values, and behaviors of society. • I can study the importance of art and how it affects society, including how my own work can influence viewers.

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Unit 3: Balance & Transformation

Timeframe: 1-2 weeks (concurrent with units 1 &/or 2)

Unit Description: In this unit, students will be introduced to the art of wheel throwing, learning the foundational skills of centering clay, opening a form, and pulling up walls. Students will learn the basic steps of preparing and throwing clay on the wheel while exploring the challenges and rewards of mastering a new skill that requires both physical control and adaptability. Students will create a small vessel (such as a cylinder or cup), with the option to refine the form or add subtle surface details that connect to the theme. This unit emphasizes growth mindset, self-reflection, and respect for process.

Enduring Understandings:

- Mastering wheel throwing requires the integration of physical coordination, focus, and adaptability; these skills develop over time through practice and reflection.
- Balance, proportion, and symmetry are essential in both the aesthetic and functional success of ceramic forms, influencing how a piece is perceived and used.
- The process of shaping clay illustrates that persistence, patience, and embracing mistakes are vital for growth as an artist and learner.
- Subtle variations in form, texture, and surface details can communicate personal expression, intention, and meaning in a ceramic object.
- The act of creating a vessel on the wheel models broader concepts of transformation, control, and adaptation, demonstrating how challenges can be transformed into artistic opportunities.

Essential Questions:

- In what ways does learning wheel throwing challenge physical coordination, focus, and adaptability?
- How do balance, proportion, and symmetry influence the aesthetic and functional qualities of a ceramic form?
- What does the process of shaping clay teach me about persistence, patience, and embracing mistakes as part of growth?
- How can subtle changes in form, texture, or surface details communicate personal expression or intention?
- In what ways does the act of throwing a vessel reflect broader ideas of control, transformation, and adaptation in art and life?

Unit 3 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
VA:Cr1B.11a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use my sketchbook to research art styles, periods, and techniques. • I can use my sketchbook to document, record, and plan my artwork. • I can use a variety of materials and methods to make an artwork. • I can choose materials to create an artwork based on a theme, idea, or concept.
VA:Cr2A.11a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can choose a theme that means a lot to me and make a series of ceramic works about it. • I can use the design process to plan, test out ideas, and create multiple pieces of art. • I can experiment with different techniques and materials to see what works best for my theme.

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can make a plan for my artwork in my sketchbook by including elements that are personally significant to me. ● I can show what I've learned about ceramics by making multiple artworks. ● I can explore multiple ceramics processes to find out how they can help me convey my ideas or concepts. ● I can ensure my artwork reflects my originality while respecting the creations of other artists
VA:Cr3A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can think about, improve, and refine my artworks or designs, using both traditional and modern standards, as well as my own artistic vision. ● I can assess both my own work and that of others using different criteria. ● I can give feedback, speaking or writing, about what works and what doesn't in someone's art, using evidence from the artwork itself. ● I can think about why I used certain techniques, why I designed the image the way I did, and which artists inspired me, to improve my artworks.
VA:Pr4A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can select artworks that best demonstrate my skills, creativity, and growth throughout the unit. ● I can reflect on how my choices in the creative process helped me express my thoughts and feelings in my artwork. ● I can share my own artwork with others during critiques. ● I can listen attentively to feedback and suggestions about my artwork from my peers and teacher. ● I can ask questions and seek clarification about the feedback I receive during critiques. ● I can choose artwork that I feel best represents my skills and personal style for a portfolio, exhibit, or event.
VA:Re7B.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can understand how the cultural background and historical context influence the creation of artworks within a specific culture or time period. ● I can recognize patterns or trends in the styles, techniques, or subject matter used by these artists. ● I can explain the concept of intertextuality and how it relates to the connections between different texts or artworks.
VA:Re9A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can judge a piece of art or a group of artworks using different standards. ● I can look at various standards used to judge art. ● I can pick criteria to judge artworks. ● I can judge artworks, whether my own or others', using specific criteria.
VA:Cn10A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can create a ceramic artwork that has personal meaning. ● I can create a concept for a ceramic piece(s) that ties to my personal connections. ● I can use my sketchbook to keep a record of my thinking and artistic journey.

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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Unit 4: Final Portfolio

Timeframe: 1-2 weeks

Unit Description: In this culminating unit, students will reflect on their growth over the course of the semester. They will revisit key projects, sketchbook work, and skill-building experiences to evaluate their progress in both technical skill and creative expression. Using this reflection, students will thoughtfully curate a final portfolio that showcases their strongest work, demonstrates their understanding of ceramic processes, and communicates their artistic voice.

Enduring Understandings:

- An artist's body of work reflects both personal identity and the ways they engage as a learner.
- Growth in technical skills and creative thinking is demonstrated through iterative practice, experimentation, and reflection.
- Thoughtful curation and reflection allow artists to highlight pieces that best communicate their artistic voice, effort, and development.
- Reflection and revision deepen the meaning of artwork and enhance its emotional and conceptual impact.
- Overcoming obstacles and challenges in the creative process contributes to artistic growth, resilience, and self-awareness.
- A well-presented portfolio communicates both the artist's process and the intentions behind their work.
- Engaging with one's own work over time fosters insights into artistic choices, personal style, and approaches to materials and techniques.

Essential Questions:

- How does my body of work reflect who I am as an artist and a learner?
- In what ways have my technical skills and creative ideas developed over the course of the semester?
- Which pieces in my portfolio most clearly show my growth, effort, and artistic voice, and why?
- How can thoughtful reflection and revision enhance the meaning and impact of my work?
- What obstacles or challenges did I encounter in this unit, and how did overcoming them influence my growth as an artist?
- How can I present my portfolio so that it communicates both my creative process and the meaning behind my work?
- What insights about myself, my artistic choices, or my approach to clay have emerged through this semester's work?

Unit 4 Standards

STANDARD CODE	STUDENTS WILL KNOW, BE ABLE TO, AND UNDERSTAND:
VA:Cr1B.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use my sketchbook to research art styles, periods, and techniques. • I can use my sketchbook to document, record, and plan my artwork. • I can use a variety of materials and methods to make an artwork. • I can choose materials to create an artwork based on a theme, idea, or concept. • Select artworks that best demonstrate my skills, creativity, and growth throughout the course. • Ensure the artwork reflects my originality while respecting the creations of other artists
VA:Cr2A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can choose a theme that means a lot to me and make a sculpture about it.

**priority standards indicated in bold*

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can use the design process to plan, test out ideas, and create multiple pieces of art. ● I can experiment with different techniques and materials to see what works best for my theme. ● I can make a plan for my artwork in my sketchbook by including elements that are personally significant to me. ● I can show what I've learned about sculpture by making multiple artworks. ● I can explore multiple sculpture processes to find out how they can help me convey my ideas or concepts.
VA:Pr4A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can select artworks that best demonstrate my skills, creativity, and growth throughout the unit. ● I can reflect on how my choices in the creative process helped me express my thoughts and feelings in my artwork. ● I can share my own artwork with others during critiques. ● I can listen attentively to feedback and suggestions about my artwork from my peers and teacher. ● I can ask questions and seek clarification about the feedback I receive during critiques. ● I can choose artwork that I feel best represents my skills and personal style for my portfolio, an exhibit or event.
VA:Re9A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can judge a piece of art or a group of artworks using different standards. ● I can look at various standards used to judge art. ● I can pick criteria to judge artworks. ● I can judge artworks, whether my own or others', using specific criteria.
VA:Cn10A.IIIa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● I can create a sculpture that has personal meaning. ● I can create a concept for a sculpture that ties to my personal connections. ● I can use my sketchbook to keep a record of my thinking and artistic journey.

priority standards indicated in **bold*

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