

Ceramics Syllabus

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Dear friends, potters, lions, and artists:

Lucky you! You have chosen to be a part of an ancient art (20,000 years old!!) and one of the best/most fun/hardest classes in the school! In doing so, you are committing yourself to high expectations and to our Ceramicists Code of Honor. You will be expected to work hard every day, improve your understanding, love and patience with clay (and yourself), and you will learn important and unexpected life lessons through clay. From me, you will catch some of my enthusiasm and passion for The Ceramic Arts, along with my confidence in you that you will be the very best you can be, if only you just give it a little try and try again. The following outlines what this class is about and what it requires.



Class Purpose: To further your capacity to create and appreciate art through the medium of ceramics; to help you build a strong work portfolio; and enable you to compete in arts contests and show your work in local and national art shows.

Learning: You lucky people will learn the following:

- How to use clay to express yourself and create aesthetically pleasing items. (No ash trays, pipes, bongos, mushrooms, pot leaves, Mrs. Potts, or elephants.)
- How to use the creative process (Inquire, Design, Create, Reflect) to generate interesting designs and excellent craftsmanship. (No clichés, copies, messy bottoms, or crumbly edges.)
- Various techniques to form, decorate, and fire clay into sculptural and functional pieces.
- How to thoughtfully discuss aesthetic and technical aspects of ceramics and art.
- How to use the creative process to improve your work.
- How to work together to maintain a happy, healthy and creative ceramics studio.
- A taste of ceramics history and the work of potters past and present.
- How to apply Life Lessons from working with clay.

Requirements for success:

- **Respect** – for each other and our work, and for tools, classroom, and time we share.
- **Use every minute of class time.** I cannot emphasize this enough. If you get behind, spend extra time in the studio. Meet the soft deadlines. Meet the final deadlines. You cannot cram at the last minute for art.
- **Pay attention.** Pull yourself out of the digital world and watch, listen, learn. It will make your life way easier.
- **If you need help, ask for it.** Keep on asking until you get it. There is only one of me. I get distr...oh look! A kitten!
- **Be ready to get dirty and work with your hands every day.** You will be working with CLAY almost every day. Nice/black clothes and long fingernails are never an excuse for not working. There are aprons to help keep you clean, or you may bring an old bath towel or a set of grubby clothes to change into. Fingernails should be a practical length, even around Prom and Homecoming.
- **Sometimes bad things happen to good projects.** If your project falls victim to neglect, theft, breakage, explosions, failures, faulty creating, or , there are alternatives for you. Partial credit is better than no credit on

any given project, but if you can't prove your project existed, and let's face it, my memory ain't what it used to be, then you will get a 0.

- **Photograph, record and reflect on your progress EVERY WEEK.** Find a partner that will take pics of you when your hands are messy. It's super cool to see where you start and how much better you get with your mad skillz.
- **Do the Google Classroom assignments.** Those will make you awesome.
- **Persevere** – If you ask for guidance when needed, learn from your mistakes and keep on trying, you WILL get it. Learn how to deal with failure. This is a life skill worth knowing about.
- **Play Nice** – we all benefit. Be an active part of our learning community. This means sharing your thoughts and work, working together, not disrupting others, and being responsible for the cleanliness, safety, care and maintenance of our class environment, tools and equipment.
- **EXTRA CREDIT:** If you have an idea or want to practice a skill or want to break the record for extra credit work, do it! For each piece that is completed and turned in, you can earn 10 extra credit points. Guess the record # of extra credit pieces!
- **“Everyone needs deadlines”** – Walt Disney.
If you miss a deadline due to absence, check with me upon your return to discuss a reasonable timeframe for submitting your work. **Some deadlines you must meet even if you are or have been absent, no matter what – the final deadline for project evaluations, “No More Wet Clay” deadline, and the final firing deadlines.** If you have any legitimate concerns, talk to me when they arise, not on the due date.



Academics: All projects will begin with investigation and designing the project, to help save you time and make your projects more interesting. There are a gazillion cool things people have done with clay and that you can try. We don't get nearly enough class time to learn and explore everything there is to know about clay. Trust me. I have been doing clay stuff for waaaayyyy longer than you have been alive, and I am STILL learning cool stuff about clay. Do some exploring on your own both research and studio time, a recommended minimum of one hour per week, and you will benefit. It will make you awesome. Document what you are learning in your weekly reflection. You will earn points for that.

Grades: available on Infinite Campus, updated every two weeks

- **50% Projects** (based on ideas and skills)
- **20% Academic:** Creative process (Weekly Inquiry, Design & Reflection through Google Classroom)
- **30% Work Habits and Clean-Up:** Graded as a percentage of class time used **WORKING WITH CLAY** and your efforts to **PLAY NICE WITH OTHERS**. Clean-Up means cleaning everything (tools, tables, equipment) and putting clay, bags, boards, everything where it belongs as clean as or cleaner than when you found it. We share this space. Be a good studio mate.

Infinite Campus: Sometimes you might see mysterious letters in the gradebook. Here's what it means.

Gradebook codes	Score	Definition
Blank	No effect on grade	The assignment has not been graded (if after the Final Deadline) or has not been assigned
T	No effect on grade	The assignment has been turned in, but has not been scored
I	No effect on grade	The assignment was turned in but needs to be redone or is, in some other way, "Incomplete", not scored, could turn into a M if not completed.
M	0 until turned in, bad for the grade	The assignment was not received by Final Deadline, but can still be turned in for credit, could remain a M
X	No effect on grade	The project grade was dismissed by the teacher, the student is not expected to make up the assignment
Ch	0, bad for the grade	The student violated the Academic Honesty policy and will not get credit for the assignment
0	0, bad for the grade	The student missed the Final Deadline and can no longer make up the assignment

Final deadlines typically coincide with 6 week progress reports. Missing a “soft deadline” or bisque/glaze firing usually means one of two things: 1. The artist is going above and beyond the project requirements and needs more time for awesomeness to occur, or 2. The artist is struggling with time management issues (due to attendance, work habits or occasional airheaded moments). Spend a moment with me to figure out a solution if you are not meeting deadlines. Because of the process of creating in clay, grades can change radically near the end – blank boxes, “I” and “M” are wild cards and can lead to sudden, dramatic fluctuations in grades.

Time Management:

- Bathroom breaks: Let me know when you need to leave the room. This privilege will be lost if abused, and/or will negatively affect your grade. Failure to tell me where you are going, excessive time (more than 10 minutes) out of class, daily time out of the room or disappearing off my radar (sneaking out) will count as an unexcused absence.
- Absences: You are responsible for finding out what assignments, etc. you missed – check online, check with friends, check with me. If you miss a demonstration, ask someone else to help you, or schedule a make-up time with me (likely outside of class), though it won’t be as in-depth. Also, plan to spend a little extra time in the studio to make up time that you missed. It is very impractical to carry a bag of clay, your tools, equipment and everything you need home with you to make up the work. You cannot take a potter’s wheel or other studio equipment home with you, either.
- Tardies: Tardies should be rare. Tardies send a message that you do not place our time together as a priority. If you are habitually tardy, we will have a conversation. I will most likely be annoyed. Don’t annoy your teacher.
- This is a working art studio, it’s for learning art, mostly through the **ongoing process of making art**. There’s no such thing as “I’m all done”, “not enough time”, or study-hall for other classes’ homework. Cleaning up early and sitting around, or standing by the door for the last five minutes of class, is not acceptable. Wasting class time is the surest way to limit your learning and lower your grade.
- If your friends visit you during class, they will be expected to work on ceramics also. You will have to teach them something. Ask yourself if you REALLY have time for that. If they distract you from your work, I will ask them to leave and you will not be allowed to have visitors for the rest of the semester.
- Wasting time on your phone etc. is asking for some tough love. Researching on your phone should happen outside of class. Your hands will be covered in clay anyway. Clay is bad for phones. And computers.
- A working art studio is not a playground. **Activities such as throwing clay in any manner, using tools as weapons or purposely breaking or stealing any work will instantly earn a cleaning detention, and take a chunk out of your grade. Subsequent offenses may result in suspension or removal from class.**



Opt Out Policy:

Studying art involves the exploration of potentially controversial subject matter including, but not limited to, race, gender, politics, religion, sexuality, language and culture. Parents or students may request optional assignments if the planned curriculum offends their core beliefs. Students also have the option to excuse themselves from class discussions or presentations that offend their core beliefs. If the student chooses not to participate, the student must remain in an adjacent art classroom for the duration of the discussion or lesson. For more information, please refer to the LPS [District Policy Parent’s Rights](#)

Cheating will be dealt with according to the Academic Honesty Policy. This includes (but is not limited to):

1. Turning in work that is not your own, taken from someone else or done by someone else for you. Helping is encouraged, but this can be accomplished without doing a significant amount of work on someone else’s project. Forgetting to put your name on all work encourages others to claim your work as their own.
2. Plagiarizing weekly journal work.

3. Copying another artist's design (professional, pinterest, student work, etc.)

What you can expect from me:



- I will be in class on time, ready to instruct.
- I will treat you with respect, listen to your concerns, be fair, and help and encourage you.
- I am by nature a good-humored person. My mom thinks I'm "cool". Derp.
- I will provide you with tea and pbj's. You should make a special mug or plate for these. In fact, we will!
- I have no tolerance for wasting time, throwing things, unsafe or bullying behavior, stealing, vandalism, leaving the communal clay bags open to dry out, not cleaning up, and disrespecting the Ceramicists Code of Honor. If this cramps your style, deal with it.

Required Fees & Materials:

- **A required \$30 class fee** covers everything and is due within the first three weeks of the semester. Once your class fee appears in Infinite Campus (usually within 2 weeks of the start of the semester), please pay the bookkeeper with a check payable to Littleton High School or pay online. If you have trouble paying the class fee, please see your counselor to apply for a grant to cover this fee.
- During the first week of class, we will join Google Classroom. We will use this for all weekly journal and academic assignments.
- Also during the first week of class, a numbered **toolkit** will be checked out to you. It contains the top 10 tools all potters and ceramic sculptors need to create. You are responsible for knowing where all 10 tools are at all times during class and during clean-up. There is no need to ever lend your tools to anyone. They have their own tools. If a friend asks you to borrow a tool "real quick", tell them to get their own toolkit. Be ruthless. If any tools are missing at the end of the semester, you will be fined \$1-5 for individual tools or \$20 for an entire kit.

Website: Throughout the semester, I will try to add to the Ceramics website. Assignments, links and general arty things will be posted from time to time. Check it! <http://jjeannell8.wix.com/jjeannelleteacher>

Extra time: If you need more work time, you may come into the studio during ANY free period (even if I have another class), during lunch or after school until 4:30 on Tuesday or Thursday Open Studio. Spending extra time in the studio can also be a way to earn academic credit or extra credit. Extra credit is good.

THANK YOU for taking time to help us make this the best class possible.

Warm Wishes and Hot Kilns,

Jennifer Jeannelle

Questions, thoughts and brilliant ideas always welcome. E-mail and/or a good ol' fashioned conversation is best.



BLOCKBUSTER BOOK ADAPTATIONS GONE WRONG