

Lesson Plan Title: Air-Dry Clay Alebrije		Grade Level: 5th
Learning Objective: Students will understand the difference between an additive and subtractive sculpture. Students will analyze and compare ancient Mesoamerican nagual sculptures and modern Oaxacan wood carvings. Students will design and create a clay animal sculpture.		
Vocabulary: sculpture, additive sculpture, subtractive sculpture, carve, alebrije, symbol		
Concept/Theme: Mesoamerican nagual sculptures		
Materials: pencil, paper, aluminum foil, masking tape, air dry clay, spackle, permanent markers in a variety of colors, acrylic paints, tiny brushes	Resources: Pictures of Mesoamerican nagual sculptures from books and/or the internet http://www.templomayor.inah.gob.mx/simbolismo/simbolismo.html http://www.dimensionantropologica.inah.gob.mx/?p=3678 http://www.oaxacanwoodcarving.com/library/index.html http://www.oaxacafinecarvings.com/ Books: <i>Design Motifs of Ancient Mexico</i> by Dover Publications (ISBN-13: 978-0-486-99596-0), <i>Native Designs from Ancient Mexico & Peru</i> by HvD Publishing (ISBN-13:978-90-810543-4-8), <i>Geometrias de la imaginación. Diseño e iconografía de Oaxaca</i> (ISBN: 978-607-455-395-6)	
Introduction (Day1): After completing the listening and observing activity for the unit, allow students to view pictures of Oaxacan wood carvings and alebrijes via internet, books, or magazines. Introduce the concepts of additive and subtractive sculptures by demonstrating a real example of each type of sculpture. Have students figure out which sculpting materials can be worked in an additive method, subtractive method or both. Have students view the videos of Oaxacan wood carvers at work. Discuss the process. Ask students why certain steps are necessary.		
Project Procedure: Day 2: I can sculpt my animal’s body parts in aluminum. After students have viewed examples of stylized Mesoamerican animal symbols, have students draw their stylized version of their chosen animal from the observation and listening activity. Remind them to identify features unique to that animal and use them in simplifying their drawing to create a symbol. Day 2: I can wrap the animal’s body parts with masking tape. Show students how to use a fettling knife to cut out shapes like a cookie cutter from a slab of clay. Demonstrate the score and slip technique to add the cut clay shapes to the tile. Distribute precut clay tiles along with an extra clay slab to each student. Have students recreate their stylized animal symbol in an additive clay relief tile. Day 3: I can build my animal form with masking tape. After bisque-firing the clay tiles, let students paint their clay tiles with ceramic glazes. Day 3: I can sculpt my animal form with air dry clay. Students will create thin slabs of air-dry clay to completely cover their animal form. They may also beign sculpting small body parts such as ears and claws onto their animal. Day 4: I can prepare my animal form for painting. Using their finger, students will fill in any cracks on their form with spackle. Students can sand the sculpture to smooth it down. Make sure to dust off the form before painting. Finally, they will paint their animal with a base coat of white acrylic paint. Day 5 and 6: I can decorate my animal form. Students can begin decorating their animal by drawing or painting symbols and/or patterns in a variety of colors. Have symbolism books ready for students to reference and add to their own art. Briefly talk about how to use variety and balance to create color harmony.		

Step 1: Sculpt aluminum foil parts



Step 2: Wrap parts with tape



Step 3: Connect parts with tape



Step 4: Cover with air-dry clay



Step 5: Sculpt details



Step 6: Spackle the cracks



Step 7: Sand the sculpture



Step 8: Paint white base coat



Step 9: Decorate the form

