

Into Africa!



Dateline February 2008. The Task: Research African masks and make some rough sketches. My art teacher said that all would become clear.

It then emerged that we had a Pottery Workshop on the 14th February – on a 'Mufti' day – but I resisted the temptation to wear African dress! My group walked over to the Art Block where we met art teacher Mrs Abbott for a two hour session. The job was not just to make a mask, but a beautiful piece of art.

Mrs Abbott asked us to gather around the central table in order to give us instructions about starting. The day before she had cut 24 individual pieces of rounded cardboard from the roll of her newly laid carpet which she used to show us how to wrap the clay around to achieve the shape of the mask.

After this, Mrs Abbott showed us different patterns we could work on. The circle pattern set my mind racing with ideas. In the end I decided to cover over my lines on the right hand side of the art masterpiece(!) and put in a shape that resembled a dart board.

Next I created a pattern in the lower left and right corner. I found the cube block. The cube block makes triangular shapes if pressed on one vertical. The cube makes lines if placed straight down.

Then I decided to place my 3D mouth on the piece as it was only drawn in. First I cut the shape out from some spare leather hard clay. Then I had to cut lines into my drawn piece and the cut out piece. Now all I had to do was paste slip over both of them and press firmly together.

I went to the next table and was given a piece of cardboard and clay. I moulded the clay round the cardboard being careful not to split it. Next I was given some slip which is just water mixed with soft clay. I cut lots of little lines into my piece of leather hard clay where I wanted to raise it – ie to make it 3D. Then on my other piece of spare clay which I could cut out from, I cut the same shape with lines on one side. Next, I put slip onto one of the pieces over the lines and pressed both together until they were stuck firmly to each other. I chose to do this for the hair, eyebrows, eyes and nose. Later on I used the same technique for the mouth.

Next, Mrs Abbott showed us different carving tools that would engrave shapes into the clay. I tried this method out on mine by putting lines on the cheeks. Mrs Abbott called us over for a talk on lumps for eyes. If the eyes were just great big lumps it is necessary to cut thin slits in the back of them to make sure that there are no air bubbles that might explode in the kiln. With my design not including large eyes, this was not necessary in my case.

At the end, I thought it would be nice to make holes in the centre of the eyes. I did this by using the circle presser (I had to press very hard) and push it into my piece of work.

At last, it was time to take it to the kiln.

Danielle Phillips, Year 6



Farewell and best wishes

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Sadly, we have to say farewell to a number of colleagues who are leaving us this year. To one and all we send our very best wishes and a heartfelt thank you!



Linda Barrett
ESL Teacher



Elizabeth Cheng
Head of Maths



Anne Corris
PE and English



Alex Davis
Marketing Student



Jane Foster
Piano Teacher



Roxanne Kelly
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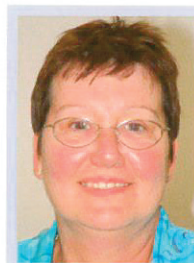
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