

# Classroom Activity

## Handmade Warriors

**Essential Questions** How do artists use clay to create expressive human figures with warrior-like traits?

**Grades** PK–6 and SDC

**Time** One class period

**Art Concepts** Hand building, scoring, expression, shapes, texture, embossing, base/foundation, human anatomy

**Materials** Red or gray self-hardening clay, rolling pins or dowels, tools for embossing (plastic straws, forks, spoons, cups, lids, etc.), cardstock, ultrafine black Sharpies, markers, crayons, toothpicks or skewers, scotch tape, white glue, cups for water and glue, brushes or sponges to apply glue

**Talking About Art** Artist Dora De Larios was born and raised in Los Angeles. She has said that she, “loved clay from the moment [she] touched the material.” Her artwork expresses her special love of clay as well as her interest in Mexican and Japanese cultural traditions. Her sculpture *Warrior* is an example of this interest.

Look closely at *Warrior*. Describe its head and face. What is it wearing on its head? What is its facial expression like? Why do you think its mouth is open? Look at each part of the sculpture’s body next—neck, chest, arms, hands, legs, and feet. How is it standing? Can you imitate it? See if you can tell how the artist made *Warrior* stand up so straight and proud (hint: look at its feet). How would you describe *Warrior*’s personality? Does it remind you of anyone you know? Can someone be warrior-like but not fight in any wars or battles? What does the word “warrior” mean to you?

Then, compare *Warrior* with *Standing Male Figure with Club*. What similarities and differences do you see? For example, both are wearing helmets, their mouths are open, and they have bare feet that make strong **bases** or **foundations** for supporting their bodies. You can also compare the two sculptures with *Haniwa: Tomb Sculpture of a Seated Noble*, noting the similarities and differences.

In addition, look carefully at how each sculpture was decorated with different shapes, lines, and colors.

**Making Art** Create a unique warrior sculpture inspired by the artworks discussed above as well as by your personal definition of a warrior. Begin with a slab of red clay on a piece of cardboard. Flatten the clay with a rolling pin, dowel, or with your hands. Use clay tools or popsicle sticks to cut the clay into sections for the different body parts: head, torso, arms, legs, etc. **Emboss** (carve, model, or stamp a design into a surface) designs in the clay using various tools (plastic straws, forks, spoons, cups, lids, the end of a paintbrush, and other things you have around the house or classroom). Join each of the body parts together by **scoring** them: make crisscross marks with a toothpick or other small tool on the two pieces of clay you want to stick together, then press the pieces together with your hands. When you are finished, you can brush white glue mixed with water onto your figure to help strengthen it.

## Making Art (cont.)

### Tips for PK and Special Education Classes

Encourage students to create simple figures or shapes and practice attaching pieces by scoring them. Discuss different shapes that can be made (ball or circle, triangle, rectangle, etc.) and help students emboss them with a variety of tools to create patterns and textures. Make the clay pieces thick; they will break off if they are too thin.

Teachers, you can also provide each student a flat, rectangular piece of clay to decorate, then help them stand it up and connect the two short edges (scoring them first) to form a cylindrical “body.” Students can draw heads, faces, arms, and legs on cardstock or construction paper. These can be cut out, taped to toothpicks, and then stuck into the clay “body.” See image of clay cylinder shaping below:



### Reflection

Display your sculptures around the room and discuss them together. How do specific elements of the sculpture reflect your personal concept of a warrior? How is your warrior similar to the sculptures we looked at earlier? How is it different?

### Curriculum Connections

NCAS. Visual Arts.K-6

CR.1.K Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials. CR.2.2 Experiment with various materials and tools to explore personal interests in a work of art or design. CR.1.2.6 Formulate an artistic investigation of personally relevant content for creating art.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.K-6

K-6.2 Ask and answer questions about key details in a text read aloud or information presented orally or through other media.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K-6

3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.

Preschool Learning Foundations, Social Emotional Development: 3.1 Social and Emotional Understanding. Seek to understand people’s feelings and behavior, notice diversity in human characteristics, and are interested in how people are similar and different.

Preschool Learning Foundations, Visual Art: 3.1 Create, Invent, and Express through Visual Art 3.1 Intentionally create content in a work of art.

# Classroom Activity

## Diseño de la Silla/Chair Design

<b>Essential Questions</b>	How do designers from different cultures exchange ideas and use models from the past to create contemporary furniture designs?
<b>Grades</b>	K–12
<b>Time</b>	One class period
<b>Art Concepts</b>	Design, function, structure, form, balance, aesthetics, organic shapes, geometric shapes, chair anatomy, ergonomics
<b>Materials</b>	White Crayola® Model Magic® modeling clay, Crayola® washable markers, cardboard bases (approximately 6" × 6"), pencils, paper for sketching
<b>Talking About Art</b>	<p>The <i>San Miguel or San Miguelito Side Chair (silla)</i> was designed in 1947 and manufactured from 1947 to 1960 by the Mexican furniture company Grabe &amp; van Beuren, whose chief designers were the American and German immigrants Michael van Beuren, Klaus Grabe, and Morley Webb. One of Grabe &amp; van Beuren's most popular pieces, the chair has two main design inspirations: the Bauhaus (1919–33), a German design school that championed simplicity, organic shapes, and the use of locally available materials; and Spanish and Mexican chairs dating back to the eighteenth century, known as <i>Campeche</i> or <i>Butaque/Butaca</i> chairs.</p> <p>Compare images of the two chairs included in this packet and discuss the following questions in small groups or as a class:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. What is similar about the two chairs? What is different?</li><li>2. Look back at the object essay in this packet to verify the materials used. Why do you think the chair designers might have chosen those materials?</li><li>3. Compare the two chairs with the diagram pictured below. Match some of the individual parts with their names. Then, use the diagram to identify your classroom chair's different parts.</li><li>4. Do you think you would sit in the <i>San Miguel Chair</i> and the <i>Campeche</i> chair differently than you sit in your classroom chair? Why or why not?</li></ol>
<b>Making Art</b>	<p>You are going to make a model of a chair based on the previous discussion and your new working knowledge of chair anatomy. Start out by making chair sketches in pencil for 10 minutes. Try combining <b>organic</b> shapes and lines with more <b>geometric</b> shapes and lines. As you work on your design, think about what makes a chair comfortable or uncomfortable for you. Also consider things like <b>function</b> (how will the chair be used?), angle, size, and proportion as well as <b>aesthetic</b> choices such as color, pattern, and texture.</p> <p>When the 10 minutes of sketching time are up, build a chair based on your design using a package of white Crayola® Model Magic®. You can add color to your chair using Crayola® washable markers.</p>
<b>Reflection</b>	Set up your Model Magic® chairs around the classroom and have a gallery walk and class critique. Then, take turns choosing fellow classmates' chairs to respond to. First, express your interest in their design by using one of the following sentence starters: I'm impressed by..., I'm interested in..., Tell me about..., This art piece made

## Reflection (cont.)

me think about..., etc. Then, share constructive criticism with the artist using one of the following sentence starters: I would suggest..., In my own work I prefer..., One thing that might make this piece more dynamic is..., Have you considered adding..., etc.

After the critique, write a self-reflection about your work. How did you find the experience of first designing and then building a model chair? What were some challenges you ran into when designing and building? Why did you choose the colors you did? If you were to build a final, large-scale version of your chair, what materials would you use? Would the chair be part of a set or would it stand alone? Where would you place the chair and how do you imagine people would use it?

## Curriculum Connections

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.K-7

K-7.1 Participate in collaborative conversations with diverse partners. 3-7.6. Acquire and use accurately grade-appropriate conversational, general academic, and domain-specific words and phrases, including those that signal spatial and temporal relationships.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.READING.9-12

9-10.9 Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work. 11-12.5 Analyze how an [artist's] choices concerning how to structure specific parts of [an artwork] contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.

NCAS.Visual Arts.6-12

VA:Cr1.2.6 Formulate an artistic investigation of personally relevant content for creating art

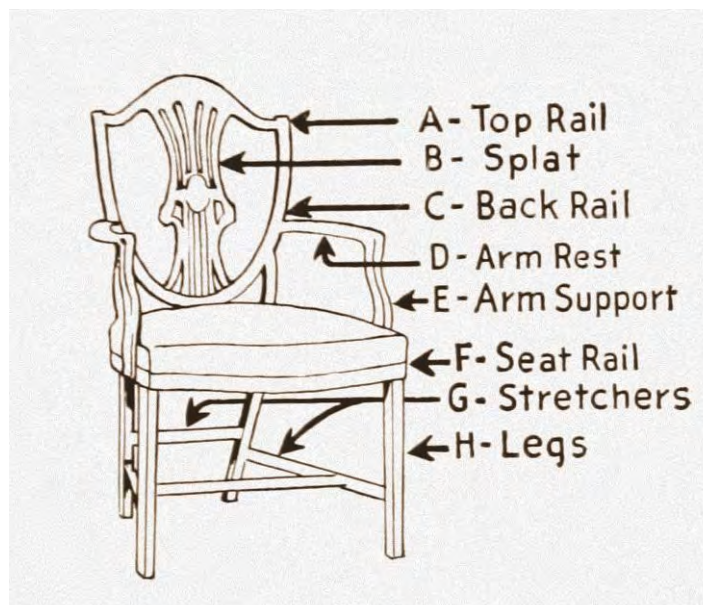
VA:Cr1.2.7 Develop criteria to guide making a work of art or design to meet an identified goal.

VA:Cr1.2.8 Collaboratively shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art and design

VA:Cr1.2.HSI

Shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art or design

## Images



# Classroom Activity

## Fashionably You: Color, Pattern, and Culture

**Essential Questions** How does clothing communicate or express unique cultures and traditions? What stories do the garments in your closet tell about you?

**Grades** 3–12

**Time** 1–2 class periods

**Art Concepts** Motif, pattern, organic, geometric, repetition, collagraph, textile, form, line, shape, colors, symmetry, Mesoamerican

**Materials** 8 ½" × 11" white Bristol or craft paper, foam paper sheets, pencils, Tempera or acrylic paints, paint brushes, water containers, paper towels, scissors, Elmer's glue, sequins, glitter glue, 6" × 6" cardboard squares, rulers

**Talking About Art** Mexico is a country with rich cultural traditions that have endured over many centuries. Textiles and clothing continue to be important vehicles for expressing Mexican culture through color, material, form, movement, and decoration. Traditional Mexican textiles are often infused with intricate, colorful patterns and embroidered with geometric, floral, animal, and human motifs. Although traditional Mexican clothing styles continue to change and adapt to contemporary ways of life, they have retained the beauty for which they are still admired by people worldwide.

Ramón Valdiosera was a Mexican artist, author, and fashion designer whose artistic career was fundamentally shaped by his infinite love for Mexican culture. In the 1940s, he began to design clothing that combined Pre-Hispanic decorative motifs, Mexican textile traditions, and contemporary European and U.S.-American styles to produce fashionable garments that appealed to women in both Mexico and the United States. Valdiosera's signature aesthetic is most recognizable in his full cotton skirts that are embellished with glass beads and sequins, and whose bold hand-painted patterns were sourced from Jorge Enciso's 1947 *Sellos del Mexico Antiquo (Design Motifs of Ancient Mexico)*, a book of ornamental designs based on the artwork of different Mesoamerican cultures.

View and discuss the images of Ramón Valdiosera's *Skirt* and the *China Poblana* outfit from the 1920s, which are included in the curriculum packet. You may also compare them with examples of Christian Dior's New Look (another of Valdiosera's inspirations) in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art:

[https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dior/hd\\_dior.htm](https://www.metmuseum.org/toah/hd/dior/hd_dior.htm).

What similarities and differences can you find between the designs? Who do you think might have worn each of the garments and for what kinds of occasions? In what ways do you think each one expresses something about the designer's cultural identity? Can Valdiosera's skirt help us understand certain aspects of Mexican culture?

**Making Art** Think about items of clothing or decorative motifs that represent something about a culture you identify with. Working with a partner or in small groups, ask and answer the following questions to prompt reflection and elicit memories: What traditional clothing items are worn by members of your family or cultural community? In what

## **Making Art** (cont.)

ways are your cultural traditions and values communicated and interpreted through clothing designs? How do color, shape, and pattern help to define cultural identities? How do individuals establish their place in society or express their identities through clothing?

View images of Mesoamerican motifs (included on page three) with your partner or small group members. What shapes do you recognize? Do you think they represent animals, plants, or abstract ideas? Ramón Valdiosera used similar motifs in *Skirt*. Why do you think he made the design choices he did?

Inspired by Valdiosera's exploration of Mesoamerican cultures in his fashion designs, you will create a transfer print using a motif inspired either by your own cultural community or traditions, or by the Mesoamerican motifs we discussed.

1. Begin by drawing your motif on a piece of paper, then cut it out with scissors and trace the design with a pencil onto a small foam sheet.
2. Then, cut out the foam design and glue it onto a cardboard base, allowing it to dry for approximately 5 minutes.
3. Next, load a paintbrush with paint and go over the foam design with it.
4. Turn the design over and press it onto a sheet of paper. You may want to smooth the back of the cardboard with your hand so that the paint distributes evenly onto the paper.
5. If you would like to create a repeat pattern with your motif on the same sheet of paper, repeat steps 3 and 4.
6. Wait for the paint to dry completely and then add details and embellishments to your design using markers, sequins, or glitter.

## **Reflection**

Participate in an in-class discussion, reflecting on the art-making experience and responding to the following questions in oral form:

How would you describe your motif? What shapes, colors, or patterns did you use and why? Does your motif carry purpose or meaning such as status, wealth, tribe, or ethnicity? Does it represent a distinctive trait of your culture?

Teachers may complement this activity by asking students to write a short narrative describing the meaning of their design and how it will be used (on clothing, furniture, art object), by whom (women/men, fashionistas, specific social or cultural groups), and for what occasion (dance, dinner party, social gathering, festival). Teachers can then select volunteers to read their narratives out loud to the class.

## **Curriculum Connections**

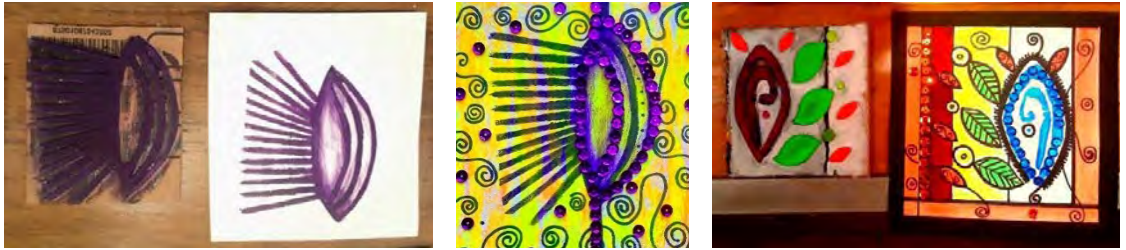
CCSS.ELA.LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.4-8

4.5.4 Report on a topic or text, tell a story, or recount an experience with appropriate facts and relevant, descriptive details, speaking clearly at an understandable pace.

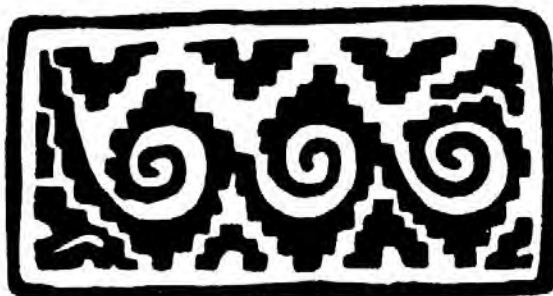
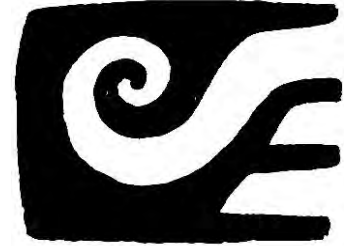
CCSS.VAPA.3-5

3.1.5 Identify and describe elements of art in works of art, emphasizing line, color, shape/form, texture, space, and value. 3.5.2 Write a poem or story inspired by their own works of art. 4.3.1 Describe how art plays a role in reflecting life. 4.4.3 Develop and use specific criteria as individuals and in groups to assess works of art. 4.4.5 Describe how the individual experiences of an artist may influence the development of specific works of art.

Images



Ramón Valdiosera, Maya de México, *Skirt* (detail), c. 1950, printed and hand-painted cotton, plastic sequins, glass beads; center-back length: 31 in., collection of Leigh Wishner, photo © Museum Associates/LACMA



# Classroom Activity

## Neighborhood Tours: Traditions & Trends

<b>Essential Questions</b>	How do artists use maps to share the cultural landmarks and special places in their neighborhoods with others? Which cultural landmarks and special places in your neighborhood would you include on a map or in a tour guide?
<b>Grades</b>	6–12
<b>Time</b>	Two class periods (for designing and printing) and one weekend homework assignment (for collecting interviews and conducting research)
<b>Art Concepts</b>	Design, symbols, patterns, imagery, color, font, typography, calligraphy, layout, maps, landmarks, identity, place
<b>Materials</b>	8 ½" × 11" white paper, computers with Microsoft Word® software and/or pencils, coloring pencils, scissors, glue sticks, colored markers, photographs and/or illustrations of tour subject matter
<b>Talking About Art</b>	<p>Based on written texts, artworks, and oral histories, we know that people from all over the world have immigrated to the United States and made it their home. In a large city like Los Angeles, the traditions and achievements of people from many different cultures continue to shape everyday life in new ways.</p> <p><i>The Goetz Map Guide to the Murals of East Los Angeles</i> is a guide to and an expression of pride in East L.A.'s Mexican American history and contemporary culture. First printed in 1975, the map was collaboratively designed by artists "Don Juan" Johnny D. Gonzales, David Botello, and Robert Arenivar. It depicts 271 public murals located at 107 different sites in East L.A., many of which were painted during the Chicano Movement in the 1960s and 1970s. At that time, Chicanos (people of Mexican heritage living in the U.S.) demanded social justice and equal rights. Chicano artists' large-scale murals critiqued racism and inequality while valuing Mexican American individuality. These images provide a public-facing visual guide to the histories of Indigenous, Californian, and Mexican American people.</p> <p>Study the map's imagery and text closely. You may also read the essay about the map in this packet. How did the artists who created it depict the cultural achievements of people in East L.A.? How does the map connect to history as well as to the time in which it was made? How can we preserve, value, and share some of the unique elements that characterize our neighborhoods and speak to the diversity of our traditions, cultures, and values?</p>
<b>Making Art</b>	<p>Four artists from the same part of Los Angeles worked together to create <i>The Goetz Map</i>. Like them, you will collaborate with a classmate from the same neighborhood as you to create an advertisement or bi-fold brochure that will entice people to visit the area where you live.</p> <p>Are there one or more cultural treasures in your neighborhood that are appreciated by you and your partner but may be overlooked by others? For example, unique architecture (commercial or domestic), parks, restaurants, specialty bakeries, public art, shops, salons, music, theater, street vendors, etc. Work together to make a list and narrow it down to your favorite places or those that you feel are most representative of the neighborhood. Think about how each place combines traditions with trends in order to keep the thread going in the community.</p>



**Making Art (cont.)**

As a weekend assignment, divide up the list with your partner and research each place. In order to sell a tour, you must know your subject very well. Research can be conducted in books or on the internet. You can also learn about the history and present-day activity of a store, restaurant, salon, etc. by scheduling a short interview with the owner, director, or manager (remember to bring a notepad or recording device!). Download or take your own photographs of each place that will arouse curiosity in the tour participant—remember that an advertisement or brochure’s main attraction is its visual elements. Think of a catchy title as you develop the text and visuals.

Assemble all of your materials and work with your partner to come up with your advertisement or brochure design. You may find that you have to cut some of your material! The final version can be created either by hand or with Microsoft Word®. Think about how font, colors, and style can help convey the “soul” of your tour. Use symbols, short but descriptive phrases, photographs, drawings, and/or illustrative borders to entice and spark curiosity in your prospective tour participants.

**Reflection**

Display the advertisements and brochures in class and walk around to view them. Then, present your project to the class with your partner, using persuasive language and tone of voice.

Prompts for oral or written reflection: How do the different places you chose to represent intertwine traditions and contemporary trends? Do you think your final project successfully conveys your ideas? Why or why not? How do the images, symbols, fonts, text, colors, patterns, and layout communicate information about both history and the present? Would your classmates want to go on your tour?

**Curriculum Connections**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SPEAKING AND LISTENING.6–8

6–8.1 Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners. 6–8.2 Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study. 6–8.4 Present claims and findings, using pertinent descriptions and details.

CCSS.HISTORY SOCIAL SCIENCE CONTENT STANDARDS.6–8

6–8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary source; provide an accurate summary.

NCAS.Visual Arts.6-12

VA:Re7.2.6 Analyze ways that visual components and cultural associations suggested by images influence ideas, emotions, and actions. VA:Re7.2.7 Analyze multiple ways that images influence specific audiences. VA:Cn11.1.6 Analyze how art reflects changing times, traditions, resources, and cultural uses.

Images



Created and designed by "Don Juan" Johnny D. González, design and drawing by David Botello, story illustrations by Robert Arenivar, *The Goetz Map Guide to the Murals of East Los Angeles* (details), 1975, offset lithograph printed by Goetz Publishing Company, 17 1/2 x 23 3/8 in., © 1975 "Don Juan" Johnny D. González and David Botello