

Cubist Portrait Bust

The first thing children learn when learning to draw a face or a figure is to view each part as a basic shape. This project approaches sculpture in the same way. Using geometric Styrofoam shapes, students build a bust or torso. The finished result resembles a simplified version of something you might have seen from Picasso or one of the other Cubist painters, only in three dimensions. This project is a good introduction to sculpture for young students.

Grade Levels K-6

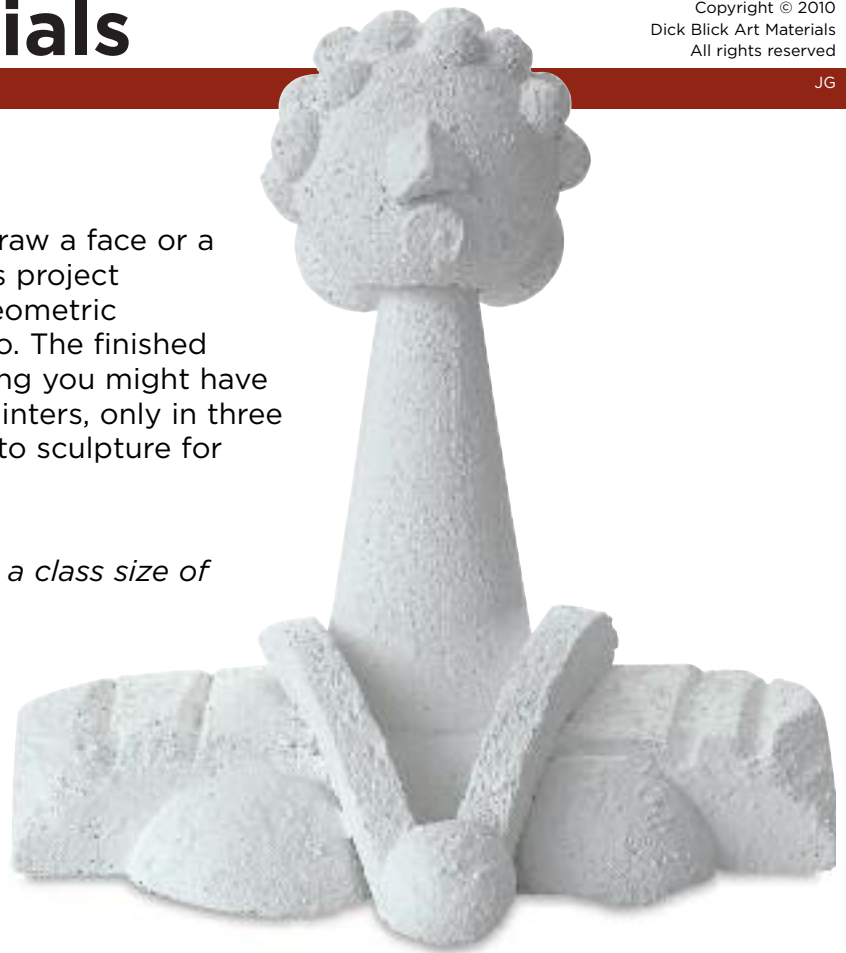
Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. If working with younger students, pre-cut some of the Styrofoam pieces into triangles, rectangles and other smaller shapes for more options.

Process

1. Students select various pieces of Styrofoam to create their torso sculpture. Styrofoam can also be cut into smaller sizes with a fettling knife or a sturdy plastic knife. If using a plastic knife, push it directly down into the foam. Sawing foam back and forth with a serrated edge will cause the foam to crumble.
2. Begin “building” by pushing a toothpick halfway into one part of the Styrofoam that you want to build onto and add another piece of Styrofoam to the other end of the toothpick. When working with smaller pieces of Styrofoam, toothpicks can easily be broken in half. Use two or three toothpicks for big pieces. Note: Glue does not hold Styrofoam in place.
3. Mix two parts Sculptamold with one part water in medium-sized bowls moments before it is to be used. Mix only an amount that can be used in less than 30 minutes, as it will begin to harden. Clean the mixing container before preparing a new batch — any hardened material left in the container will act as a catalyst and speed the hardening of the new batch.
4. Apply the mix to the Styrofoam sculpture with craft sticks. Apply a little bit at a time, starting at the top, such as the top of the head or the top of the shoulders. If the mixture slides off, that means too much has been applied or the mixture is too heavy. Smooth the surface as the mix is applied —



Materials

[Styrofoam Blocks and Shapes](#), assortment (60928-); each student will need a variety of small shapes (styrofoam can be cut)

[Amaco® Sculptamold®](#), 25-lb bag (33104-1025); share one bag across class

[Kemper® Fettling Knives](#), Hard (30349-1020); share one among three students

[Jumbo Craftsticks](#) 3/4" x 6", box of 500 (60406-0500); share one box across class

Round toothpicks

Optional Materials

[Blickrylic® Polymer Gloss Medium](#), quart (00711-1027)

[Golden Nylon Round Brushes](#), assortment of 72 (05134-1072)

[Blickrylic® Student Acrylics](#), pints, set of 6 colors (00711-1049)

Various Styrofoam packing materials

Plastic Knives (use in place of Fettling Knife)

Process, continued

it will be hard and bumpy if not smoothed. Use an old brush to smooth if needed.

5. As the mix dries, the sculpture can be turned on its sides. Again, add the mix to the topmost areas first. When all areas have been completely covered, let the sculpture cure for a day or two until completely dry.

Options

- Incorporate Styrofoam packing materials to create additional shapes.
- When the sculpture is dry, coat it with Blickrylic Gloss Medium to keep the project protected.
- Paint the finished sculpture with Blickrylic paints. The small trays will help limit the acrylic used and keep waste at a minimum.



National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1 Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes

K-4 Students use different media, techniques and processes to communicate ideas, experiences and stories.

5-8 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas.

Content Standard #5 Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others

K-4 Students understand there are various purposes for creating works of visual art.

5-8 Students analyze contemporary and historic meanings in specific artworks through cultural and aesthetic inquiry.



