

Mini Furniture Fabrications

Students often take furniture for granted, yet how much do they really know about the furniture where they eat, sleep and study? Have they ever looked at these objects and considered them art? Or considered that an artist may have had a hand in creating them?

Ask students to close their eyes and envision the furniture in their everyday lives. What shape is the kitchen table? What size is the living room chair in relation to the coffee table? Are the legs made of wood or metal? Are they painted? This awareness exercise will help students learn to “see” the things surrounding them – an important tool for an artist. It will also help them understand that art and design are part of everything around them, and that art can be beautiful as well as functional.

Grade Levels 7-12

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

Preparation

1. Review the principles and elements of design. Discuss scale, rhythm and repetitive use of shape, line and texture.
2. Have students plan a room by determining the scale, design theme, and which furniture is appropriate.

Process

1. Have students select various wood pieces from an assortment of craft wood sheets, blocks, sticks, beads and more.
2. Measure and cut the wood pieces to proportionate dimensions, making sure the furniture legs are even. Pieces should be designed to be structurally sound and stand on their own. Thin, lightweight balsa should break cleanly, or it can be



Materials

Weldbond® Universal Adhesive, 8-oz (23819-1105); share 12 across class

Blick® E-Z Grip Knife (57419-2980); share 12 across class

Excel® Hobby Blades pkg of 5 (57457-0005) to share

3M® Production Sandpaper, 9" x 11", Fine Grit, 10-sheet package (34916-1303); share across class

Blick® Plastic Ruler, 12" (55403-1012); share 12 across class

Assorted wood materials for furniture, recommend:

Economy Wood Project Bag, basswood pieces (60416-8480)

Genuine Balsa Wood assorted (33301-)

Wooden Dowel Rods, 1/4" x 12", package of 12 (60448-1412)

Creativity Street® Wood Shapes, package of 1,000 (60453-1000)

Square Dowel Economy Bag, 12", package of 12 (33600-1001)

Mini Carving Blocks Bags, Balsawood (60415-1001)

Unfinished Country Beads (60711-0000)

Polished Natural Beads (60712-0000)

Smart Sticks™, box of 1,000 (60407-1000)

Easy Cutter® (35106-1000) for cutting lightweight wood pieces up to 1" wide x 1/2" thick

7" Coping Saw (34933-1745)

Optional decorative materials

Blick® Matte Acrylics, assorted colors (00727-)

Decorative Paper Assortment, 1-lb (12440-1001)

Process, continued

cut with scissors, while thicker or heavier wood will require a wood cutter or coping saw.

3. Sand each piece lightly before gluing to eliminate any jagged edges.
4. Assemble the furniture by gluing the pieces together. Use a small amount of glue for best results. Make sure to hold glued pieces in place for several seconds until the adhesive firms up.
5. Add design elements that make the furniture cohesive.

Options

- Find or build a container to create an appropriate size "room" for the furniture.
- Paint and decorate the furniture with acrylic paints or decorative papers.

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

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

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.

9-12 Students apply media, techniques and processes with sufficient skill, confidence and sensitivity that their intentions are carried out in their artworks.

Content Standard #2 Using knowledge of structures and functions

5-8 Students employ organizational structures and analyze what makes them effective or not effective in the communication of ideas.

9-12 Students demonstrate the ability to form and defend judgments about the characteristics and structures to accomplish commercial, personal, communal or other purposes of art.

