

Shoe Shrine

Make a sculptural shrine from a shoe and enclose a relic.

(art + social studies)

A shrine is defined as a “container or receptacle for sacred relics.” A shrine can also be a place that people visit because it is connected with someone or something that is important to them. In most cases, a shrine is devoted to a religious person or relic, but there can be personal shrines devoted to someone or something that is important in an individual’s life. The word shrine comes from the Latin *scrinium*, which means a case for books or papers, or a chest. In most cases, a shrine is highly decorated.

This lesson plan repurposes a shoe to create the structure for a shrine. Aligned vertically, it quickly loses the shoe reference and becomes a sculptural container instead. An outgrown or secondhand shoe is primed with modeling paste, covered with ornate embellishments, and then becomes a background for an object. The object can be a symbol of a student’s favorite thing, idea, place, or event. A hand formed air-dry clay object or even a found object can be placed inside the shrine.

GRADES 3-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Gather outgrown or secondhand shoes — one shoe per student.
2. Distribute brushes and modeling paste across the class.
3. Gather various embellishments, paints, and glue.

Process

1. Consider what honorary item the shrine is being built for. This may influence the choice of shoe and/or type of embellishment. Either build the item from air-dry clay, or use a found object to be placed inside the shoe shrine.
2. Begin by altering the shoe with scissors, if desired, to create a hollow for the object that will be enshrined. (This step may not be necessary if the shoe has an adequate opening.) Remove any shoestrings, straps, or the tongue, if desired.



Materials (required)

Blick® Artists' Acrylic Modeling Paste, pint (00623-1066); share two across class

Jacquard® Lumiere 3D Metallic Paint and Adhesive™, 1 oz (00752-); share five across class

Amaco® Stonex White Clay, 5 lb (33247-1005); share one box across class

Blick Studio® Acrylics, 8 oz, (01637-); share at least six colors across class

Weldbond® Universal Adhesive, 12 oz (23819-1005); share one across class

Wood Spools, package of 60 (60444-1060); share one bag across class

Blick® Scholastic Short Handle Golden Taklon Flat Wash, set of 4 (05859-0049); share six sets across class

Optional Materials

Creativity Street® Big Box Pipe Cleaners, 12" (61466-1001)

Creativity Street® Acrylic Gems, 1 lb bag (60722-0001)

Economy Glass Bead Assortment, 1 lb (61536-1001)

Modeling Tools (60500-)

Hippie Hemp™ (61532-)



Process, continued

- Using a brush, apply a medium-thick coat of modeling paste to the entire interior and exterior of the shoe. While the paste is still wet, textures can be applied with the brush or modeling tools. At this point, beads and other small embellishments can be pushed into the modeling paste, or they can be glued on in the next step. Allow to dry overnight.
- Now the fun begins! Add paint, beads, chenille stems, lengths of chain, acrylic gems ... the possibilities are endless! Beads and other elements can be secured by either pushing them into the modeling paste in the first step, gluing them on, or by using Lumiere 3-D Paint and Adhesive.
- When the shrine is completely finished, glue a wooden spool into the shoe where the object will be placed. Paint the spool if any part of it will show. Glue the enshrined object onto the other end of the spool and hang it vertically! A small piece of twine or yarn can be glued to the back of the shoe to act as a hanger.

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

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

K-4 Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses.

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 #3

Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas.

K-4 Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art.

5-8 Students explore and understand prospective content for works of art.

9-12 Students reflect on how artworks differ visually, spatially, temporally, and functionally, and describe how these are related to history and culture.



Step 1: Cover a shoe with a coat of acrylic modeling paste. Add texture with tools, and add inclusions such as beads. Allow to dry.



Step 2: Begin embellishing! Add paint, beads, acrylic gems, pieces of chain or old jewelry, sticks, or chenille stems using glue or 3-D paint — the possibilities are endless!



Step 3: Create an item to enshrine out of air-dry clay, or use a found object. Glue a wooden spool inside the interior of the shoe, and attach the object to the other end to finish the shrine.