

ColorWorks™

Ceramic Arts Lesson Plan

Riverbed Fossil

Dinosaurs weren't the only living things to leave behind fossils. Scientists called Paleobotanists have also been able to use plant fossils to get a better idea of what life was like in Prehistoric Time. Fossils also help in classifying plants based on their structure. Our fossil may have been formed when a fern branch fell into the soft mud along a riverbank. Over the course of a great number of years, the mud hardened and turned into a sedimentary rock. Even though the fern is gone, its impression remains.



Kiln
required

Instructions

Materials List

Cone 5-6 Clay

Duncan® Cover-Coat® Opaque Underglazes

- Assorted Colors

Duncan® E-Z Stroke® Translucent Underglazes

- Dark Colors

Brushes & Tools

- BR 593 Economy Glaze Brush
- TL 401 Clean Up Tool

Miscellaneous Supplies

- Sponge
- Newspaper
- Plenty of Leaves, Weeds, Dry Grass
- 2 Boards of Equal Thickness to Use as Shims for Slab Rolling
- Rolling Pin(s) for Rolling Slabs and Rolling Leavings

For Best Results

Please read all instructions before beginning project. Refer to photo for color & design placement.



- 1 Place the 2 boards parallel to each other on either side of the clay so that the slab can be rolled to an even thickness.



- 2 Cut out an uneven edge for the fossil with clean up tool and rewrap the excess clay.



- 3 Apply 3 coats of a light colored Cover-Coat® to the slab, making sure that each coat is dry before the next is applied.

Tips for Success

- 1) Have students collect 10-20 types of leaves. This way, extra leaves can be shared with students who have none.
- 2) Leaves that are well-defined work better than very fine or small leaves. Look for leaves that have large veins or interesting textures.
- 3) If a student is having difficulty removing a leaf, just leave it in the clay. It will burn out in the firing.

Vocabulary

- **Clay:** A firm, fine-grained mixture of minerals from the earth that is flexible when wet and hard when dry.

Instructions Continued ...

- 4 Arrange the leaves on the slab and lay a sheet of newspaper over the clay.



- 5 Carefully roll over with the rolling pin to press the leaves into the clay.

- 6 With the leaves still in the clay, carefully apply 2 coats of a darker colored Cover-Coat®. When the piece is completely dry, carefully remove the leaves and fire to cone 04.



Last Steps!



7 After fired, sponge on E-Z Stroke® that has been diluted with water, wiping it back so that it stays in the depressions left by the leaves.

8 Fire to cone 06.



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Visual Arts Standards

The relevant National Visual Arts Standards were considered in the design of this lesson plan.