

## Lesson #21 Plaster Bag Sculptures

Grade Level: K - 6

### Description/Objective

The students complete a plaster sculpture. They learn sculpture vocabulary.

### Time

1 hour

### Materials

Large zip lock bag (1 per student)

3 cups plaster of Paris per student (Adult should fill bag with plaster outside or in well ventilated area before introducing to students.)

2 cups warm water

Watercolor paints (8 or 16 Prang or Crayola brand best) 2-3 students can share one set if necessary

#8 brush (1 per student)

2 water containers (for each watercolor set)

Pearl acrylic paint (optional)

### Procedure

1. Adult puts 3 cups of plaster in a large zip lock bag. It is best to do this outside to avoid inhaling dust. Add 2 cups of warm water. Close bag and get the air out.
2. Give bag to student. Demonstrate holding the top of bag with left hand while kneading out lumps of plaster with right hand.
3. Students continue to knead for about 8-10 minutes until the plaster starts to get thick.
4. When the plaster starts to feel thick students must stop kneading, hold the bag in an interesting shape and not move it. The plaster will crumble if it is moved before being completely dry. Note: It is not possible to pinch the plaster to form a thin wall. This will make the sculpture weak and more breakable.
5. When the plaster is hard, set it down for about five minutes to cool off.
6. Pull the bag off the plaster. The sculpture remains.
7. Brush off the excess plaster with a large bristle paint brush.
8. Paint the sculpture with watercolors. The paint will be darker in the textured areas and will look interesting.
9. Use thinned pearlized white acrylic paint to accent some areas of the sculpture.

### Subject Matter Integration

SCIENCE: Talk about gypsum (plaster of Paris). Discuss how heat is given off when a substance turns from a liquid to a solid.

### Variations/Extensions

1. Use 6" round waxed food containers or bottom of ½ gallon milk containers. Press about a 1/2" of wet ceramic clay in the bottom. Carve, draw, or build a design or picture into the clay. Prepare the plaster in

zip lock bags as in above lesson or prepare a bulk amount. Each bag will make two round plaster relief sculptures. Adult pours plaster into container while still thin. It will harden in the shape of the prepared clay. Mark container to show top of design. Put a paper clip in back near the top before plaster sets up; you will then be able to hang your relief sculpture.

2. Plastic bag sculptures can be mounted on a stick before they dry.