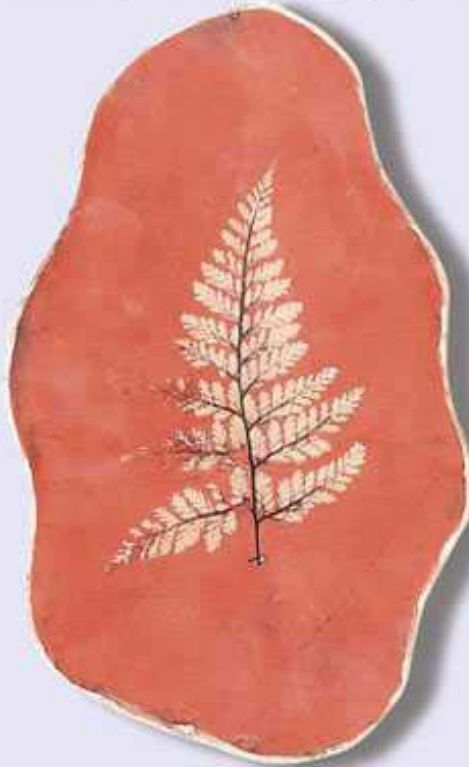


Duncan Colorworks

Riverbed Fossil Ceramic Art Lesson Plan



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Riverbed Fossil - - Ceramic Art Lesson Plan

Grade Level: K-8

By Randy Ashenfelter

Introduction:

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.

Educational Objectives:

This lesson provides opportunities for students to:

- Make an "instant fossil" using leaves collected from their own environment.
- Study the fossil record and learn how fossils are formed.
- Learn about techniques that paleontologists and paleobotanists use to study fossils.
- Study Botany and understand various classifications of plant life.

References:

When the Dinosaurs Were Gone

<http://www.dinogone.org>

Geological Society of America

<http://www.geosociety.org>

The Cleveland Museum of Natural History

<http://www.cmnh.org/education>

Earth Science Books and Resources

<http://www.brookscole.com/geo>

The Library of Congress

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/homepage/lchp.html>

Teaching Tips:

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

Duncan Materials:

Cover Coat® Opaque Underglazes:

- 10, 2oz Cover Coat Underglazes in assorted colors

E-Z Stroke™ Translucent Underglazes:

- 2-3, 1oz E-Z Stroke Underglazes in dark colors



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Brushes/Tools:

- BR 576- ¾" Premium Glaze
- TL 415- Sponge

Miscellaneous Materials:

- Soft clay (approximately 2 lbs. for each student)
- Rolling pin(s) for rolling slabs and rolling leaves
- Two boards of equal thickness to use as shims for slab rolling
- Plenty of leaves, weeds or dry grasses to roll into the clay
- Newspaper

Step-by Step:

1. Place the two 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 and rewrap the excess clay.
3. Apply three coats of a light colored Cover Coat to the slab making sure that each coat is dry before the next is applied.
4. Arrange the leaves on the slab and lay a sheet of newspaper over the clay.
5. Carefully go over them with the rolling pin to roll the leaves into the clay.
6. With the leaves still in the clay, carefully apply two coats of a darker colored Cover Coat. Let dry.
7. When the piece is completely dry, carefully remove the leaves and bisque fire to Cone 04.
8. 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.
9. Fire to Cone 06.

Project Closure:

Language Arts connection and project closure

- Write and illustrate a brief description of this project, include detailed descriptions of the materials used and what happened during this project.

National Standards for the Arts

<http://www.ed.gov/pubs/ArtsStandards.html>

<http://www.mcrel.org/compendium/Standard.asp?SubjectID=13>

State Standards:

<http://edstandards.org/Standards.html>

Or refer to the Dept. of Education for a specific state.

Please visit www.duncanceramics.com Art Educators tab, Learning tab, to view the Standards based Vocabulary and Language Instruction, Art Project Rubric, and Writing Rubric documents.