

TITLE: Make a Faux Jade Sculpture

Grades: Elementary

TIME REQUIRED: 10- 15 Minutes

CONCEPT STATEMENT:

Jade was a precious material in Ancient Chinese culture because of its' physical properties. Many small sculptures were made for use in tombs as offerings.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Use fine motor skills to mold and join 3D forms to create a representational animal such as the jade sculptures in the VMFA Chinese galleries.
2. Gain an understanding of the importance of animal symbolism and the use of objects as offerings in ancient Chinese culture.

STANDARDS OF LEARNING CORRELATIONS:

Virginia Mathematics Foundation Block 4: Geometry

The child will describe simple geometric shapes (circle, triangle, rectangle, and square) and indicate their position in relation to an individual and to other objects.

c) Recognize and name shapes (circle, triangle, rectangle, and square).

d) Describe the position of objects in relation to other objects and themselves using the terms next to, beside, above, below, under, over, top, and bottom.

Virginia Standards of Learning  
Matter

3.3 The student will investigate and understand that objects are made of materials that can be described by their physical properties. Key concepts include

a) objects are made of one or more materials; b) physical properties remain the same as the material is changed in visible size; and c) visible physical changes are identified.

Geometry/ Focus: Characteristics of Plane Figures

1.13 The student will construct, model, and describe objects in the environment as geometric shapes (triangle, rectangle, square, and circle) and explain the reasonableness of each choice.

3.14 The student will identify, describe, compare, and contrast characteristics of plane and solid geometric figures (circle, square, rectangle, triangle, cube, rectangular prism, square pyramid, sphere, cone, and cylinder) by identifying relevant characteristics, including the number of angles, vertices, and edges, and the number and shape of faces, using concrete models.

### Common Core Standards

CCSS.MATH.CONTENT.1.G.A.2 Compose two- dimensional shapes (rectangles, squares, trapezoids, triangles, half- circles, and quarter- circles) or three- dimensional shapes ( cubes, right rectangular prisms, right circular cones, and right circular cylinders) to create a composite shape, and compose new shapes from the composite shape. 1

### Visual Arts

#### Virginia Visual Arts Foundation Block 1: Visual Communication and Production

The child will develop an awareness of the mechanics of the visual arts and produce various forms on a regular basis.

c) Use a variety of materials, textures, and tools for producing visual art.

d) Develop and use fine motor skills necessary to produce two- and three- dimensional works of art.

K.11 The student will use motor skills (e.g., pinching, pulling, squeezing, twisting, pounding, rolling, folding, cutting, modeling, stamping) to create two- dimensional and three- dimensional works of art.

2.11 The student will identify symbols from various cultures.

3.15 The student will examine the relationship between form and function in the artifacts of a culture.

5.10 The student will create sculpture in the round, high relief, or bas- relief, using three- dimensional media, including clay.

### MATERIALS:

1. Green and white model magic
2. Small boxes to take home sculptures
3. Clay tools for creating textures

### VOCABULARY:

Jade- a hard, typically green stone used for ornaments and implements and consisting of the minerals jadeite or nephrite.

Jadeite- a green, blue, or white mineral that is one of the forms of jade. It is a silicate of sodium, aluminum, and iron and belongs to the pyroxene group.

Nephrite- a hard pale green or white mineral that is one of the forms of jade. It is a silicate of calcium and magnesium.

Moh's Hardness scale- a scale used to measure the relative hardness of a mineral by its resistance to scratching. From softest to hardest, the ten minerals of the Mohs scale are talc (measuring 1 on the

scale), gypsum, calcite, fluorite, apatite, orthoclase, quartz, topaz, corundum, and diamond (measuring 10 on the scale).

Carving- the cutting of material such as stone or wood to form a figure or design.

Tomb- a special burial place (often underground, often containing objects for the afterlife).

#### OVERVIEW:

'Soft, smooth and glossy, it appeared to them like benevolence; fine, compact and strong- like intelligence' Attributed to Confucious (about 551- 479 BC)

Throughout Chinese history, the most valued materials were jade, bronze, silk, and lacquer. Jade is considered highly valuable and has been treasured for thousands of years. Jade objects of animals and replicas of tools and weapons have been discovered in ancient Chinese tombs, dating back to 7,000 years. Because of its rarity and hardness, in ancient China it was a material often used for ceremony, adornment, and ritual.

The Chinese word for Jade is *yu*, which actually has a more general meaning to embrace many shades of green, grey, and brown hardstones. Jade refers to two types of minerals, jadeite and nephrite. Jade is made up of aluminum and a silicate of sodium. Jadeite, which was found in Burma, is a darker green and was not used in China until the 18th century. Nephrite, found in central China, is lighter in color and also has color variations. Both are quite strong and difficult to work because of their tight crystalline structure. The jade objects found in China before the 18th century are actually nephrite. Jade was found in rivers where boulders broke off and washed down. Craftsmen then cut them into slices to begin their work. To work into sculptural forms they must be ground with abrasive sand. The Chinese produced a surprisingly large number of beautiful jade carving considering how difficult the material is to work with. It is polished to a very smooth finish and the texture and look of the material has symbolic reference to purity, beauty, immortality, and wisdom.

Jade carving was popular during the Neolithic time, around 4,500 BC. Ceremonial versions of stone tools, as well as animals and adornments were carved out of jade and placed in tombs in the Liaoning province in the Hongshan culture. Possessing carved jade could have been a symbol of power and wealth. A popular form was the *cong* and the *bi*, which were rectangular tube shapes and flat discs. Animal carvings were less prolific probably because most of the objects were carved from thin slabs and the dimensional animals required larger pieces of jade. In the tomb of Fu Hao, a powerful woman and concubine of the Shang dynasty, 755 jade artifacts were found, including a huge number of different animals as well as dragons. Animals were important as symbols of contact with the spirit

world and protection in the afterlife. The use of jade has remained popular throughout Chinese history. Later in the Ming and Qing periods ancient jades and decorative motifs were copied, and brought the ancient past through time and into the present.

[http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online\\_tours/asia/chinese\\_jade/jade\\_the\\_material.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/explore/online_tours/asia/chinese_jade/jade_the_material.aspx)

China's Cultural Relics

The British Museum Book of Chinese Art

Download a VMFA gallery map here:

[http://www.vmfa.state.va.us/Visit/Gallery\\_Maps/Gallery\\_Maps.aspx](http://www.vmfa.state.va.us/Visit/Gallery_Maps/Gallery_Maps.aspx)

Find these related works of art in the VMFA collection:

Object number: 47.20.455a-d | Artist: Unknown

Period: Qing Dynasty | Culture: Chinese

Medium: Jade

Location: East Asian Gallery

During the Qing dynasty beauty and art were truly appreciated. These carefully carved narcissus flowers are perched in stands the shape of a lotus. Interestingly, narcissus flowers typically represent winter, while lotus represents summer.

#### ACTIVITY DIRECTIONS:

1. Tear off a plum - sized piece of white Model Magic clay. Take a grape sized piece each of blue and yellow Model Magic clay and mix the two together until the color is light green.
2. Divide your ball into three equal pieces or thirds. Use one third and roll a small oval shape for a body.
3. Use a separate piece and roll four cylinders. Next, add them to the underside of the body.
4. Use the final piece to roll a small ball for the head.

5. Pinch or pull out a tail, horns, or ears.
6. Press with clay tools to make nostrils, eyes, and hooves.
7. Use clay tools to add a furry texture to the body.