



# Youth Pottery

With Kirsten Smith

**Ages: 6-12**

This ten week course will cover all the basics of learning how to work with clay. We will explore the three main handbuilding techniques (pinch, coil and slab), wheel throwing and how to glaze/ decorate all of the projects created.

## Week 1

Introduction to the studio. Learning how the studio functions, a mini tour and the first talk about the process of ceramics. This week we will be making pinch pot ice cream bowls, with animal heads and feet attached to make them a creative and functional project.

Conversation topic - the ceramic process, how the clay goes from wet and mouldable to ceramic after it's fired.

## Week 2

Hand building. After last week the students will understand a little bit about using clay. This week we will be making slab built mugs, while also rolling coils for the handles. Surface decoration will be added by carving or using stamps.

Conversation topic - What else could be built out of slabs? Where else do we see ceramics in our everyday life? (examples are bathroom tiles, bricks, dishes, flower pots)

## Week 3

Wheel Throwing. Now that we have some experience with clay it's time to get on the wheel. This class will focus on the main points of throwing. Centering clay, opening, and pulling a wall. Each student will get at least two pieces off the wheel in this class. Some might be vases, some might be key dishes all depending on the student.

Conversation Topic- Main conversation will be answering questions about wheel throwing, and talking about how the wheel works.

## Week 4

Glazing. Our first batch of projects (ice cream bowl, mug, and wheel pieces) will be bisqued and ready to paint using underglazes. This class will focus on surface decoration and preparing all of the pieces for the glaze kiln. I'll show photos of different surface decorations used in ceramics as inspiration to the students and to also create conversation about those pieces. This class is usually peaceful and focused for students.

#### Week 5

Coil Building. This class we will be rolling long coils and twisting them on top of each other to create a vessel. We will also learn how to create small decorations out of the coils by twisting them in different ways. The project we are creating is a flower vase.

Conversation topic- What makes a good vessel? How tall it is, wide it is or how it holds water? Just to get the students to think about the functionality of what they are making.

#### Week 6

Wheel throwing. Back on the wheel! Making whatever the students want to make. Each student will have two creations from this class. This time they will understand how the wheel works a bit more and have more experience with clay.

Conversation topic- Answering questions about wheel throwing. Talking about what we are making on the wheel and why we are making them.

#### Week 7

Glazing. This week we will be underglaze painting our pieces (coil vase, wheel thrown pieces). If students finish decorating a little early we will have the option of making hand built ornaments.

No conversation topics this week to just allow the students to focus and relax while decorating.

#### Week 8

Wheel Throwing. Back on the wheel again! This time with the intention of making a gift for someone you love. It can be a holiday gift or just a special present for someone. Thinking of a special person and what they might like or want in an object. This gives a different intention to the project allowing the student to think differently about the objects they are creating.

Conversation topics - what is everyone making and who are they making it for? Why did you choose that object for that person? (Example- I'm making my uncle a coffee mug because he loves to drink coffee, I'm going to decorate it green because that's his favorite color)

#### Week 9

Underglazing and handbuilding. This week we will paint our wheel thrown gifts with underglaze and prepare them for the glaze kiln. This won't take the entire class, so we will also be making flower pots using the slab building techniques we have already learned. Students will also have the option to make ornaments instead.

#### Week 10

Final week. This week we will be painting our flower pots and ornaments from last week. We will be using acrylic paint and these projects can go home right at the end of class. They won't be glazed but they will be fully functional as flower pots and ornaments.

Conversation topics- What have we learned about ceramics? What was your favorite part of the class and what was the most challenging part of class?