Unit 5B Containers

ABOUT THE UNIT

In this unit children explore the craft tradition of making vessels and containers. They develop their own designs and build a three-dimensional form to represent a vessel or container that will hold something special that they would wish for. They consider examples by contemporary designers and ceramicists and look at work from different cultures.

WHERE THE UNIT FITS IN

This unit builds on Unit 4B 'Take a seat', where children explore the design of chairs from different times and cultures and discuss what the designs tell us about everyday life and culture. It links with history: world study of ways of life in different times and cultures.

WHAT THE UNIT COVERS

Art	**Craft**	**Design**	2D	**3D**	**Individual work**	Collaborative work	
Line	Tone	Colour	Pattern	**Texture**	**Shape**	**Form**	**Space**
Painting	Collage	Textiles	Digital media	**Sculpture**	Print making		

VOCABULARY

In this unit children will have an opportunity to use words and phrases related to:

- containers, *eg urn, vessel, basket*
- source material, *eg design, abstraction, geometric, traditional*
- visual and tactile elements, *eg shape, form, space, pattern, line*
- techniques, *eg coiling, slabbing, weaving, assembling*

RESOURCES

For practical work

- drawing materials, *eg pencil crayons, soft pencils, oil pastels*
- white or coloured paper and sketchbooks
- painting materials, *eg watercolours, inks, hand-painted collage paper*
- materials for three-dimensional work, *eg clay or papier mâché or textiles or natural materials*

Suggested examples of art, craft and design

- vessels and containers of:
  - different sorts, *eg urns, baskets, cooking pots*
  - different sizes and shapes
  - different materials, *eg ceramic, wood, metal, withies*
- reproductions of the work of contemporary craftspeople, *eg Bodil Manz, Kate Malone, Ed Rossbach, Fran Reed, Dorothy Gill Barnes, Norie Hatakeyama, Birgitta Wendel*

EXPECTATIONS

At the end of this unit

most children will be able to:	explore shape, form, space and decoration; work from source material to help them with their work; experiment with and combine materials and processes to design and make a three-dimensional form; compare and discuss ideas, methods and ways of working in others' work, relating these to their own ideas; adapt and improve their work as it progresses
some children will not have made so much progress. They will be able to:	explore ideas; experiment with materials, tools and techniques; make a three-dimensional form; discuss similarities and differences between their own and others' work; suggest ways of improving their own work
some children will have progressed further. They will be able to:	select visual and other information to help them develop ideas; manipulate materials, tools and techniques to develop and extend their ideas for a three-dimensional form; combine visual and tactile qualities and match these to their ideas and intentions; analyse and comment on ideas, methods and approaches used in their own and others' work, relating this to their intentions; adapt and refine their work to reflect their own view of its purpose and meaning

LEARNING OBJECTIVES CHILDREN SHOULD LEARN	POSSIBLE TEACHING ACTIVITIES	LEARNING OUTCOMES CHILDREN	POINTS TO NOTE
EXPLORING AND DEVELOPING IDEAS			
• to collect visual and other information to help them develop their ideas	• Ask the children *What is a container?* • Ask them to collect and display a range of everyday objects that can be used to 'contain' items. • Ask the children to talk about the form of the objects and the space they contain. *What materials, methods and techniques have been used? Which have used colour? Do any of the objects tell us where or when they were made, and if so, how?* • Ask the children what they think and feel about the containers and what these objects mean in their lives. *Are they functional or decorative? What meanings do they hold?*	• suggest ideas for what a container might be • identify qualities of form, materials and methods, and say what they think and feel about them	• Local collections often have examples from particular periods or cultures.
• about the roles and purposes of artists, craftspeople and designers working in different cultures • to record from first-hand observation • to explore ideas for container forms	• Introduce the children to the work of contemporary craftspeople. This could include talking about: – the use of geometric forms and patterns in ceramic work. Children could compare this with work based on natural forms – the ways in which different craftspeople use materials, *eg paper baskets, forms made from skin, gut, seaweed and cane, containers made from bark, tree roots and branches, paper fibre strips* • Ask the children to make drawings in their sketchbooks of the objects they have studied. Ask them to annotate their work, commenting on distinctive features, *eg form, materials, techniques, decoration.* • Ask the children to create designs for vessels and containers. Discuss the idea that each container will 'hold a wish' – something special that pupils would wish for. Ask them to experiment with line, shape, form and pattern and use a range of drawing media, *eg pastels, watercolours, inks or collage.*	• select observations, ideas and experiences to use in their work • collect and record visual and other information in a sketchbook • explore ideas for designs	• Provide photographic images of containers. For information and visual material contact: – the Crafts Council at www.craftscouncil.org.uk – the British Museum at www.british-museum.ac.uk – Comtemporary Applied Arts at www.caa.org.uk
INVESTIGATING AND MAKING			
• to investigate and combine visual and tactile qualities of materials and processes • to apply their experience of materials and processes, developing their control of tools and techniques • to use a variety of methods and approaches to communicate ideas, and to design and make a container form	• Ask the children to experiment with card and paper to create small-scale container forms. Ask them to create simple basic forms, *eg cylinders, cubes, pyramids.* Then ask them to create asymmetrical forms by producing straight-sided shapes in card and joining these with gummed paper strips. • Ask them to explore different ways of elaborating on the basic form by adding materials and using cut paper techniques, *eg curling, twisting, fringing, weaving*. • Remind the children about techniques for building forms from clay, *eg rolling out slabs and building them into a three-dimensional form.* • Show them how to make coils of clay by rolling the clay into strips. Show them how to make a three-dimensional form by forming the coils into a spiral to make a base and building up the sides by laying coils around the edge of the base, one on top of another. The insides of the form can be smoothed to strengthen them. • Ask the children to build a clay container form using a combination of methods. Encourage them to control and create a visually interesting form that 'contains' space. Their ideas might be based on the forms they created in card or paper but they should allow the clay to determine the new form. • Ask them to elaborate the form in different ways, *eg by:* – *adding smaller cut-out shapes of clay* – *adding coils of clay* – *creating surface texture or pattern by impressing objects* – *roughening parts of the surface* – *modelling forms on the inside of the container*	• create interesting three-dimensional forms • elaborate three-dimensional forms in interesting ways • practise using clay modelling techniques • create and decorate a clay container form	• If clay is not available, containers can be constructed from card and/or papier mâché, textile or natural materials. • Papier mâché forms can be made around more complex shapes than plates or bowls or they can be made from several pieces. Or the surface of a basic card form can be developed using papier mâché. A coat of PVA applied to the finished piece will help to protect it. With care and supervision a microwave oven can also be used to speed up the drying process. • Storage will be needed for the container forms as they are made. Clay forms will need to be kept moist by placing them inside an airtight plastic bag. • Once completed, the clay forms can be left in the air to dry out. If possible, arrange for them to be 'biscuit' fired and glazed. Link with Unit 6D 'Reversible and irreversible changes' in the science scheme of work to show how heating some materials can cause them to change. • Alternatively, the 'leather hard' clay could be coloured with oxides or slip made from a different coloured clay.
EVALUATING AND DEVELOPING WORK			
• to adapt their work according to their views and describe how they might develop it further • to compare ideas, methods and approaches in their own and others' work and say what they think and feel about them	• Ask the children to make appropriate changes to their work as it progresses. Ask them to refer to the work of others to inform their own work. • Ask the children to review their own and others' work and comment on: – the forms they have created. *How visually interesting are they?* – the methods they have used. *Have they combined the techniques of coiling and slabbing in interesting ways?* – the surface of the form. *Does this enhance the form?* – the space inside the form. *Has this been developed in an interesting way?*	• adapt their work as it progresses, taking account of their own and others' ideas • identify aspects of their work that are successful and those they might develop further	• Create a display of the children's two- and three-dimensional work. This can be used for evaluation by the class and other classes within the school. • Links with the framework for planning (year 6, term 2) in *Teaching speaking and listening in key stages 1 and 2* (QCA/99/391), where children learn to be critical in a constructive way and respond to other children.

PRIOR LEARNING

It is helpful if children have:
- used clay or a modelling material
- learnt how to roll out slabs, make coils and model in relief
- developed manipulative skills for using small tools

FUTURE LEARNING

In Unit 6B 'What a performance', children develop the skills and experience of working in three dimensions, by designing and making a piece of headwear for a character in a story.

ADAPTING THE UNIT OF WORK

Children could:
- explore ways of 'containing' space on a large scale using techniques such as weaving, plaiting, knotting, netting. This links with Unit 6A 'Shelters' in the design and technology scheme of work
- learn to make three-dimensional forms on a larger scale or by using other materials, *eg finding creative ways of using papier mâché, combining other materials such as cardboard and metal*

Ref: QCA/00/439