

A Grade K-2 ARTful Hour...

Making Plasticine Pictures (Relief Sculptures)

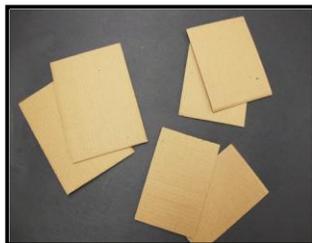
March 2012

With Heidi Stoddart

Early Elementary = Personal Expression through Art and Picture Making

Materials

- Newsprint & pencils (to sketch a 'plan'; cut paper same size as the 'backer boards')
- Backer boards (eg. cardboard or boxboard; 4"x6" or 4.5"x6"; 1 per student)
- Plasticine (red, orange, yellow, light green, dark green, light blue, dark blue, purple, pink, black, white, grey, brown; cut into small chunks the size of a pat of butter, and store in egg cartons – 1 carton per colour)
- Plasticine cutting tool (strong gauge fishing line strung between popsicle stick 'handles')
- Plasticine tools for texture (eg. old pencils, combs, plastic forks, popsicle sticks...)
- Paper towel (coarse school ones work well for wiping oily residue from hands between colours!)
- Powerpoint with internet connection & speakers (for video)
- Barbara Reid picture books
- Clean-up list
- Vinyl mats to protect desks (optional)



SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION

Introduce the medium... Plasticine!

(Picture of Plasticine on Powerpoint)

Before saying any more about the medium, pass out a small piece (pre-cut from one of the egg cartons) to each student to 'check it out'. After a few moments of exploring and playing with the Plasticine sample, ask students to describe how it feels. Re-collect samples.

- ✓ *Teacher Tip: Plasticine was invented more than 100 years ago in England by an art teacher names William Harbutt. (Find more info @ www.barbarareid.ca)*

Artist Who Loves to Work with Plasticine... Barbara Reid

(picture of her on Powerpoint)

Biographical Info on Barbara Reid

- She was born in 1957 in Toronto, Ontario, and she still lives there
- Little girl: liked spending summer at her family's cottage
- Childhood favourites: animals, spending time outside, reading and drawing
- In school, *she liked writing, liked reading even better, and liked art best of all!*
- Attended Art College (OCAD)
- Entered a calendar contest with a picture she made using an unusual MEDIUM or material for pictures = Plasticine. (*and was embarrassed to learn that famous painter and Group of Seven member A.J. Casson was a judge*). Her fun work made the judge laugh and she won the contest!
- After that, decided it was good to have fun with her work, and she making more art with Plasticine
- Became a freelance illustrator after Art College
- First picture book using Plasticine, "The New Baby Calf"; most recent are "Perfect Snow" and "Picture a Tree"

Barbara Reid's Hands at Work...

(Click on "Making a Plasticine Picture" link in Powerpoint for www.barbarareid.ca)

- Just showing the 'intro clip' before you 'Enter' the site to see Barbara Reid's hands at work, and ask students if they noticed what she made FIRST using Plasticine.
- After they guess, hit "Re-Play" to observe again, noting the order (the blue background was first) and what she made LAST (the little details, like the eyes of the ladybug). *Note: The words "Barbara Reid". "Replay" and "Enter" were all created afterwards using typed letter, not Plasticine.*

Barbara Reid in Her Studio...

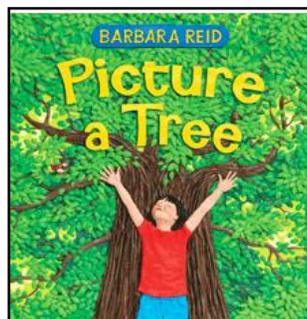
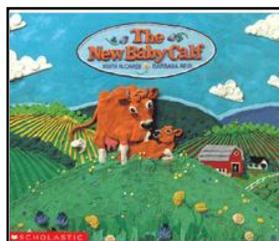
(Click on "Barbara Reid in her Studio" link in Powerpoint to go to YouTube video from www.barbarareid.ca)

- Watch Barbara Reid creating a picture of "Nib", the main character from **Subway Mouse**.
- Show just enough of the clip to see how she starts by sketching a plan, then how she creates the background (sky, clouds) by spreading the Plasticine, then stop the video.

Barbara Reid's Picture Book Illustrations...

(Share some picture book samples, then look at some individual illustrations on the Powerpoint)

- ✓ Teacher Tip... It may be confusing to reconcile the idea of "Plasticine pictures" versus "paper pages" in the books with young students. Be sure to discuss this so students understand that she USED Plasticine to make the pictures, but they took PHOTOS of her artwork to make the books.



Images from www.barbarareid.ca & Amazon.ca

Looking at Art: Illustrations by Barbara Reid...

(several samples on Powerpoint)

Notice throughout...

- Did she cover the whole board with Plasticine? (no board left showing!)
- Do you see a Horizon Line? (where the sky meets the ground)
- Guess what part of the picture she made first (eg. background/sky or part that is furthest away!)
- What details do you see? How do you think she created the texture (e.g. grass)?

Focus on one particular illustration (eg. child in sled)...

- What did Barbara Reid make first? (the sky, then the snowy ground)
- Where is the horizon line? Can you trace the horizon line with your finger? (where the sky meets the ground)
- What colours did Barbara Reid use?
- What shapes did Barbara Reid use? (circles for snowflakes, rectangles for the sled, squares for the checkered blanket...)
- What is the biggest thing in the picture? (the child in the sled = MAIN THING!)

Create

PROCESS – Plan and Background

Start with a plan!

(Guidelines on Powerpoint)

- ✓ *Teacher Tip...* Decide in advance if the subject is wide open for your class, or if you are creating images relating to a specific theme or topic (eg. A season, things that grow, a self-portrait, an animal studied in science, an illustration for a story...). Note that leaving this open for students to decide individually what they want to create is entirely suitable. If wide open, invite students to brainstorm a list of possibilities to get them started (eg. favourites – animals, foods, hobbies; places – home, school; people – family, friends, pets; nature – flower, tree, snowman, rainbow, animals...)
- ✓ *Teacher Tip:* These guidelines are to help students experience success with this medium. The horizon line will help them understand where the sky and ground need to be 'spread' over the entire backer board. Sticking to ONE MAIN THING that is BIG will help students develop an idea that is suitable for this medium.

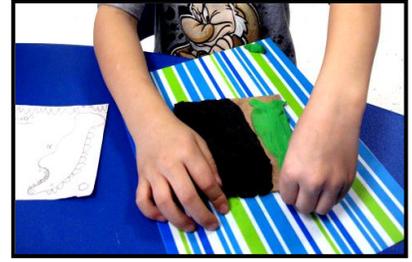
Guidelines:

1. Horizon line (where the sky meets the ground)
 - *Note:* If inside, include a line that shows where the wall meets the floor. Images of underwater scenes, or scenes in outer space, may not require a horizon line.
2. One main thing
3. Make it BIG (using simple shapes)

Distribute newsprint, and students can start planning their picture.

Starting on the Backer Board...

- Print your name on the back with pencil
- Lightly draw just the **horizon line** only on your cardboard (can set the newsprint plan right beside the cardboard to help students line it up and get it started in the right spot).
- Start with the part that is furthest away (for most, will be the sky).
- Share all of the colour possibilities with the class, then DEMO how you will choose one or two colours to start your background
- DEMO how to 'tear' a BLUEBERRY-SIZED piece of Plasticine from the chunk, warm it by rolling in the palms of your hands, and spread over the background using your fingers and thumbs.
- Fill the sky with Plasticine so that you cannot see the cardboard.
- Then, go on to the ground next (snow or grass or road...), filling the portion of the backer board below the horizon line.



Clean-Up

1. Plasticine stored/displayed safely (eg. along white board ledge, on shelf or counter; away from direct sunlight, heat source or extreme cold)
2. Clean up Plasticine bits from desk
3. Return all Plasticine and tools to the proper bin
4. Wipe hands with paper towel
5. Paper towel in garbage
6. Wash hands with soap and water
7. Enjoy books/illustrations by Barbara Reid

- ✓ *Teacher Tip... students can place their newsprint plan right on top of their Plasticine background for safe-keeping till next time (to remember what to do!) AND to keep the Plasticine clean too!*

SESSION 2: Main Subject

Barbara Reid has described TWO basic shapes that can be used to make almost anything from Plasticine:

1. **"PANCAKE"** (Roll a small ball/sphere. Set it on your workspace and press down on it with your thumb to flatten.)
"What could this be used for?" (head, sun, wheel, middle of flower, snowman...)
2. **"NOODLE"** (Roll a thin 'worm'/cylinder. Set it on your workspace and flatten slightly. Try this again with a short, thick cylinder.)
"What could be these be used for"? (blades of grass, legs, arms, antenna, stems, hair...)

... After students have had some time to work at their main subject, stop to discuss...

DETAILS (e.g., DEMO "eye" starting with a white pancake, then adding a smaller black pancake on top for the pupil)

...When first few are close to finishing (so they don't rush just to get to the tools), stop to discuss...

TEXTURE using tools to carve or etch into the Plasticine.

Teacher Tips:

- ✓ You may need to discuss *SOLID* shapes versus just outlines – you shouldn't see through it;
- ✓ Encourage students 'build' the parts they need on their workspace, then transfer them to the background (avoids smudging or Plasticine sticking if students need to make a change/correction)
- ✓ *LAYER* (like a pizza! eg. dog... what first!? Body first, then head, legs, ears, mouth, spots, collar, eyes and other details later!)
- ✓ *WIPE* hands between colours (wipe on *DRY* cloth!)
- ✓ Set parameters for # of colours allowed at workspace at any time (eg. 3) so that there is always lots of Plasticine available in the cartons for others to use

More Ideas:

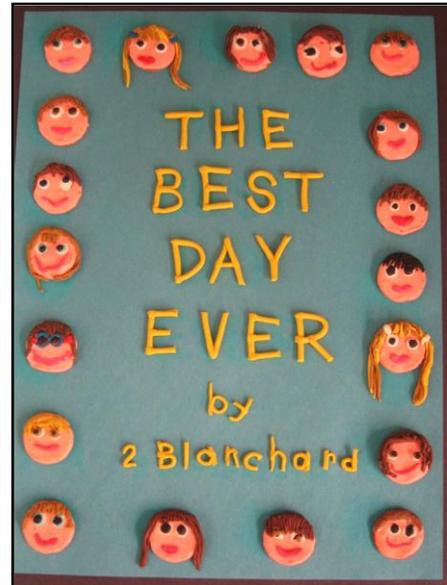
Old CD case



Egg-Shaped 'backer'



Self-Portraits & Story Illustrations



Small Styrofoam plate



Plasticine sculptures

