Clay Bird Whistle
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The purpose of this unit is to be a resource for a multidisciplinary assignment in ceramics. The outcome, through the notion of sharing personal cultural experiences in a classroom setting, is to promote a consciousness of the commonalities in the many aspects of globalization by exploring and sharing creativity.

Personally connecting to the history of ceramics can be overlooked in pursuit of mastering the material. This activity is a spring board for personal investigation into a little known part of the globe as the venue for learning more about our senses, sensibilities and the world. Clay is the vehicle for this adventure.

If taken in context to a particular comparative setting, the information becomes personalized and therefore more real. Consequently, the new found knowledge may be accessed for future extrapolation beyond the conditions of the created artifact.

Ceramics and the processes are almost as old as fire. Their origins are just as mysterious. Each culture develops its own unique style of ware. While visiting an artisans shop in Old Town Plovdiv, Bulgaria I noticed a couple of odd clay pieces on Georgi Genchev’s work bench by his wheel.
One piece was a painted earthenware ocarina, but the other I could only recognize as a very small pitcher glazed in traditional Bulgarian fashion. It was actually a whistle partially filled with water. When played, by blowing in the spout, it sounded as if a bird was calling. It was a fascinating piece. Its association with the ocarina is that it requires the same air flow dynamics.

The assignment is to create a whistle from clay. Since the whistling sound is the ultimate goal, some experimentation will be required for the whistle to function. The students should work the most efficient way to acquire and apply the new information. Here are some very helpful web sites associated with the project—especially to help with the difficulty of spitting the air stream to create sound.
Bulgarian art history:
http://www.archaeologicalmuseumplolvdiv.org/_en/?id=collection&prm=renaissance

Bulgarian ceramics history:
http://www.art.bg/i_pott.htm
http://www.omda.bg/engl/ethnography/ceramics.html

Bulgaria e-magazine

American-Bulgarian Fulbright:
http://www.epcc.edu/programpages/fulbright/

Difference between ocarina and whistle:
http://www.whistlepress.com/faq.htm#q2

Making a clay whistle:
http://www.hominid.net/whistle_making_sequence.htm

Ocarina history:
http://www.ocarina.it/history.htm

Ocarina music:

Other musical instruments:
http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/Exhibitions/Instruments/Anglais/mpr_j_txt08a_en.html

Whistling arrow
http://www.student.utwente.nl/~sagi/artikel/whistle/

PVC flutes
http://science.univr.it/goccia/whistle/

Bernoulli effect
http://personalwebs.oakland.edu/~rojo/P120/Sound%20production.htm

surface tension
http://hyperphysics.phy-astr.gsu.edu/hbase/surten.html#c3
**Materials**

Map or globe showing Bulgaria  
Internet access  
Fine body earthenware or stoneware clay  
Clay tool kit

**Schedule**

Hour 1-2  Intro Bulgaria and the whistle assignment.  
Look up information on Internet.

Hour 3  Compile and review student findings. Questions and answers based on web sites provided. Session is for exploring in groups for clay constructions capable of making whistling sounds.

Hour 4-6  Make and complete greenware whistle.

Hour 7  Glaze bisqued whistle.

Hour 8  Critique finished whistles.