

## Clay Texture Tiles Inspired by Preston Singletary

A HANDS-ON ART ACTIVITY  
DESIGNED BY MONA  
EDUCATORS

### Description

Students will discuss Preston Singletary's glass artworks with a focus on the textures, and create a small clay tile based on a Spanish word for an element of nature. They will write the corresponding word underneath the tile once it is mounted.

### Relevant Vocabulary

- Spanish vocabulary list: Nature Words
- Slip
- Score
- Subtractive vs. additive sculpting
- Low (bas) relief vs. high relief



Example of completed tiles  
Source: Museum of Northwest Art

### Materials

- Size template (blocks or anything you want to use to make tiles the same size)
- Scrap paper and pencils
- Air-dry clay or regular clay if kiln is available
- Clay tools
- Paper towels to wrap clay if saving for another day
- Thick backer board cut into strips
- Markers for writing the vocabulary words
- Hot glue or extra strength glue for attaching the tiles to the backer board
- Container with water if clay dries out

## Instructions

- 1) Introduce Preston Singletary's artwork and biography using the included text and images found at the end of this lesson plan. Encourage students to explore the textures in the glass artworks. Next, ask students to choose a set number of vocabulary words and plan to make one tile for each word.
- 2) Pass out the scrap paper and pencils and ask students to sketch a plan for their tiles. It may help students if they trace a size template onto the tiles to make them uniform.
- 3) Pass out clay, water, and clay tools. Some everyday objects like glasses, silverware, and straws can become tools. Have students examine provided images of Preston Singletary's work and think of what tools would have been used. You can also refer to the included resources at the end of this lesson to introduce building techniques and 3D forms.
- 4) Ask students to use their clay tools to create tiles that represent each of their vocabulary words. Remind students that the clay will dry pretty quickly, so use water to keep pliable.
- 5) Once dried/baked, the tiles can be mounted on the backer boards using a strong glue or hot glue, and words can be written with markers on backer boards as well. Optional: the tiles can be painted prior to mounting.

## Learning and State Standards

Fulfills **Washington State Arts Learning Standards:**

- **VA:Cn10.1.I** (Document the process of developing ideas from early stages to fully elaborated ideas)
- **VA:Cr2.1.II** (Through experimentation, practice, and persistence, demonstrate acquisition of skills and knowledge in a chosen art form)
- **VA:Cr1.2.I** (Shape an artistic investigation of an aspect of present-day life using a contemporary practice of art or design.)

# PRESTON SINGLETARY

**PRESTON SINGLETARY (BORN 1963) IS A NORTHWESTERN GLASS ARTIST KNOWN FOR HIS USAGE OF TLINGIT THEMES AND DESIGNS. HE COMBINES ABSTRACT PATTERNS WITH ANIMAL IMAGERY TO EXPRESS BOTH HIS FORMAL EDUCATION AND CULTURAL HERITAGE. HE USES HIS ART TO ADVOCATE FOR AND AFFIRM INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, USING TRADITIONAL MATERIALS WHENEVER POSSIBLE.**

*The Calling*  
Blown and Sand Carved Glass  
Image Source:  
[prestonsingletary.com](http://prestonsingletary.com)



Image Source: Native Arts and Cultures Foundation



**"IT WAS ONLY WHEN I BEGAN TO EXPERIMENT WITH USING DESIGNS FROM MY TLINGIT CULTURAL HERITAGE THAT MY WORK BEGAN TO TAKE ON A NEW PURPOSE AND DIRECTION."**



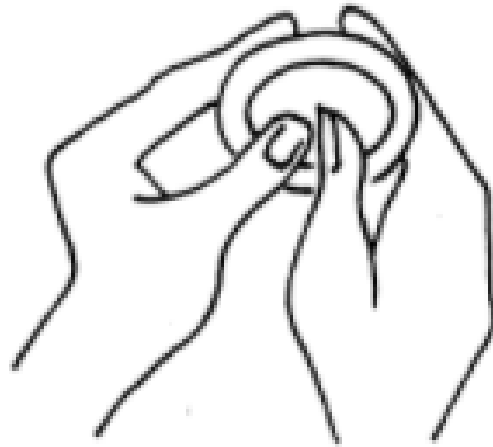
*Genetic Memories*

Blown and Sand Carved Glass

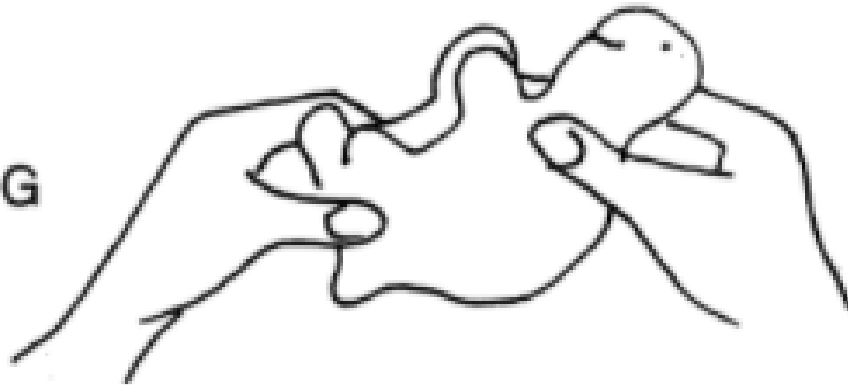
Image Source: [prestonsingletary.com](http://prestonsingletary.com)

# CLAY BUILDING TECHNIQUES

PINCHING



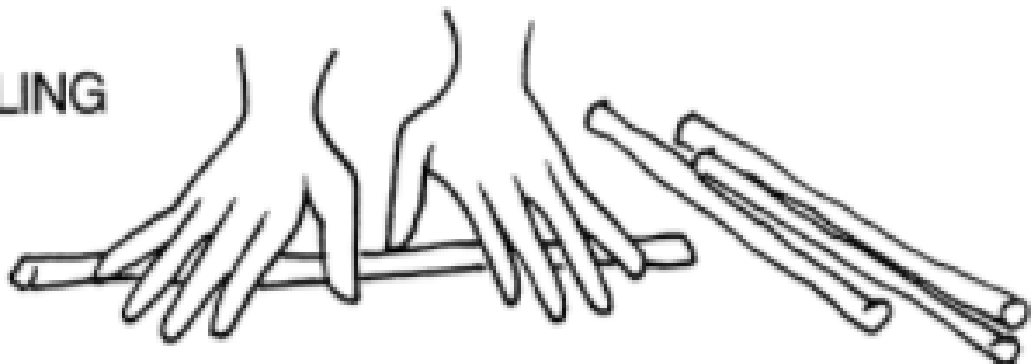
MODELING



SLAB

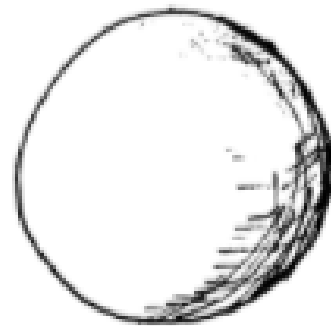


COILING

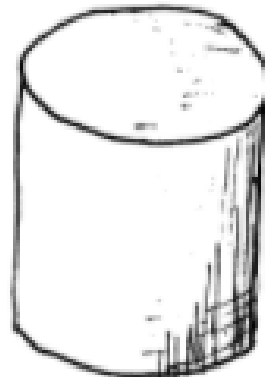


# 3D FORMS

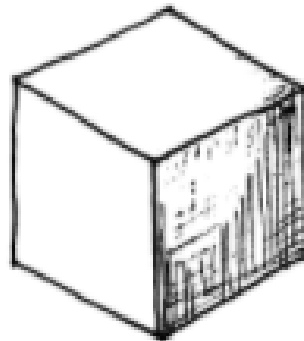
SPHERE



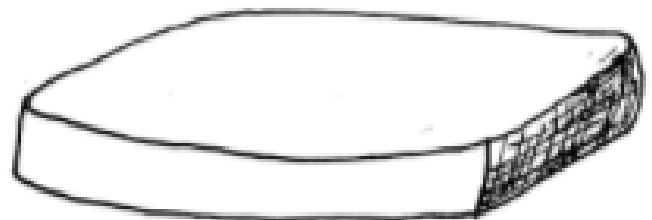
CYLINDER



CUBE



SLAB



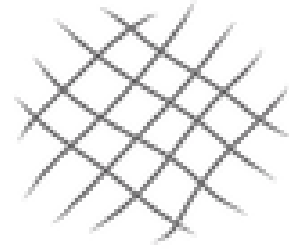
COIL



# HOW TO JOIN CLAY

**1**

**SCORE**



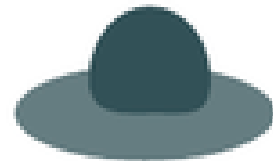
**2**

**SLIP**



**3**

**STICK**



**4**

**SMOOTH**

