## Thrown bowl

**Art Curriculum Matrix: 7 - 12**

| Project       | Thrown bowls with different approaches to trimming  
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Could be done as class project for Empty Bowls fundraiser</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>7-12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content/theme</td>
<td>Volume and proportion in bowls &amp; seeing trimming as way of <strong>creating</strong> form</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Objectives    | • Understand elements to structure of bowl form  
|               | • Understand how trimmed foot can change perception of bowl volume and form  
|               | • Experiment with different approaches to creating trimmed foot on bowl  
|               | • Explore ways of discussing formal relationships within vessel  
|               | • Seeing trimming as way of creating form rather than removing excess clay |
| Essential Questions | • What is the relationship of a bowl to a sphere? What is a “horizon line” in relation to bowl forms?  
|               | • How does the vertical and horizontal scale of a foot change the way a bowl form is seen? Its function? Its gesture/attitude?  
|               | • How does the interior line of the bowl relate to the exterior silhouette?  
|               | • How does the shape of the bowl relate to/affect its function?  
|               | • How do formal decisions about principles of design (proportion, line, balance, etc.) affect the gesture/attitude/stance of a vessel?  
|               | • (Optional) How does a non-mirrored bowl challenge your expectations? Of perception? Of use? Of value? |
| Demos/Skills  | Wedging and preparing clay  
|               | Throwing bowl forms that are lower than horizon line, at horizon line, above horizon line  
|               | Compressing interior with rib  
|               | Compressing lip for strength and visual termination  
|               | Removing pot from wheel  
|               | Centering leather hard pot on wheel to trim  
|               | Trimming feet with different widths and heights  
|               | Finishing the bottom of foot, compressing  
|               | (optional) Trimming feet that do not mirror interior silhouette  
|               | (optional) Trimming feet off-wheel with rasps, carving tools, wires |
| Vocabulary    | volume  
|               | proportion  
|               | scale  
|               | horizon line  
|               | sphere  
|               | trimming  
|               | rasp  
|               | transition (in form)  
|               | structure (of form)  
|               | interior/exterior  
|               | parts of pot (lip/rim, foot, belly)  
|               | profile/plan view  
|               | vertical/horizontal  
|               | compressing  
|               | stages of clay (greenware, leather hard, bone dry, bisque, glaze ware)  
|               | silhouette  
|               | termination  
|               | gesture  
|               | direction/shape  
|               | rim  
|               | foot  
|               | **Elements and Principles of Design** |
| Artist/Culture References | Anne Mette Hjortshøj (Danish)  
|                          | Ann-Charlotte Ohlsson (Danish)  
|                          | Gerd Hiort Petersen (Danish)   
|                          | Bodil Manz (Danish)            
|                          | Alev Ebuzziya Siesbye (Danish)  
|                          | Ann Linnemann (Danish)         
|                          | Guillermo Cuellar (Minnesota)  
|                          | JD Jorgenson (Minnesota)       
|                          | Mike Helke (Minnesota)         
|                          | Lisa Buck (Minnesota)          
|                          | Peter Scherzer (Hawaii by way of Minnesota)  
|                          | Steve Rolf (River Falls, WI)   |

| Materials                  | Clay (15-20 lbs. per student)  
|                           | Throwing tools (sponge, wire, pin tool, wooden knife, rib)  
|                           | Trimming tools (small and large loop tool)  
|                           | rasps (optional)  
|                           | Trimming tools  
|                           | Ribs of different sizes and shapes (Brand=Sherrill Mudtool ribs, small green, yellow, and red are especially helpful)  
|                           | shower caps/plastic  

## Process

### Prep Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Steps</th>
<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Look at bowls  | Display several bowls with different shapes, lining them up so students can see the profiles | • Let’s name all the parts of the bowl  
|                |                                                                        | • Why do you think a rim is called a lip? How is a lip different than a wall?  
|                |                                                                        | • What do you notice is different about these bowl shapes when you look at them side by side?  
|                |                                                                        | • How does the size of the foot change a bowl? Its function? Its gesture/attitude?  
|                |                                                                        | • How does the shape of the bowl relate to/affect its function? How does it control your access to the inside and does that affect what you would use the bowl for?  
|                |                                                                        | • What is the relationship of a bowl to a sphere? What is a “horizon line” in relation to bowl forms?  

### Construction

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
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<th>Dialogue</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Wedge clay     | 1. Wedge 3-5 balls of clay that are grapefruit size (about 3 pounds)   | • How can you create a continuous curve in the interior from the center to the rim?  
|                | 2. Make sure balls are round without lumps                            | • What is the relationship between the interior line of the bowl form and the exterior silhouette?  
|                |                                                                        | • How does the direction of the rim change the gesture of the bowl? It’s potential use?  
|                |                                                                        | • How does the shape of the rim change the gesture of the bowl? It’s potential use?  
| Throw 3 bowl types | 1. Throw bowl type 1 that with the rim below the horizon line | • How can you create a continuous curve in the interior from the center to the rim?  
|                 | 2. Throw bowl type 2 with the rim at the horizon line                | • What is the relationship between the interior line of the bowl form and the exterior silhouette?  
|                 | 3. Throw bowl type 3 with the rim above the horizon line             | • How does the direction of the rim change the gesture of the bowl? It’s potential use?  
|                 |                                                                        | • How does the shape of the rim change the gesture of the bowl? It’s potential use?  

### Process cont.

| Trim bowls (steps 2 & 3 are optional) | 1. Trim 1-2 bowls so the exterior shape **mirrors** the interior shape of the bowl.  
2. Trim 1-2 bowls so the exterior shape **does not mirror** but contrasts the interior shape of the bowl.  
3. Trim 1-2 bowls off-wheel by carving clay away using a rasp, trimming tools, wires, etc. | • How does your perception of the bowl’s volume change with a taller/shorter foot?  
• How does your perception of a bowl’s volume change with a wider/narrower foot?  
• What is the shape of the bowl’s foot? Is it a composite or single  
• How can you experiment with the way the bowl meets the ground?  
• How can you experiment with the relationship between the inside and outside of the bowl?  
• When trimming off-wheel, how can you new solution to a foot (rather than mimic a wheel-thrown foot)? How will it meet the table? Will it be symmetrical? Will it be round? |
| --- | --- | --- |

### Analysis

| Analysis | 1. Line up bowls in row on high table/shelf so viewing pot from profile  
2. Discuss! | • What is the relationship between the interior and exterior of a bowl?  
• How would you describe the gesture of a particular bowl?  
• How does the proportion of the foot to body affect the gesture of the bowl?  
• How does the proportion of foot to body change the function of the bowl?  
• How does the direction/shape of the rim affect the space above the bowl? Can you imagine the shape the flare of the rim creates beyond the bowl form? Is it enclosing space or expanding into the space above?  
• How does the rim direction and shape affect the function? Your perception of how this pot will live in the world?  
• How could surface design/texture change the way the form is seen? Where would you apply surface techniques and what would that do?  
• (optional) How are the pots with the off-wheel/carved feet different in terms of their relationship to the table, function, proportions, etc.? How did trimming off-wheel change your process and idea of what a foot can be? |
| --- | --- | --- |

**Things to focus on when teaching wheel-thrown bowls**

- Focus on creating even, 1/4” walls.
- Focus on compressing the interior curve with a rib. Try not to get “well” at bottom of bowl but continuous curve from center to rim.
- Expand volume from the interior of bowl.
- Focus on weight, shape, and direction of lip. Examine how a rim/lip acts to terminate space.
- Pay attention to even drying so that part of pot does not dry quicker than other side.
- Focus on holding trimming tools different ways for different effect.
- Focus on choices in width and height of foot ring.
- Finishing bottom edge of foot.
Danish Ceramics Resources

Books

• Scandinavian Art Pottery: Denmark and Sweden, Robin Hecht, 2000
• From the Kilns of Denmark: Contemporary Danish Ceramics, Wendy Tarlow Kaplan and Hope Barkan, 2002
• Danish Ceramics: Boymans-van Beuningen Museum, Collected 1970-1995 (Catalogue)

Articles

• “An Introduction to Danish Ceramics and Potters,” Ceramics Today, 7 part article on Danish Ceramics around turn of 20th c. Written by art historian, but good teacher resource of influential artists/factories accompanied by examples of work. http://www.ceramicstoday.com/articles/danish_ceramics.htm (links to additional pages at end of article)
• In-depth article on Bodil Manz from Blackwell Gallery exhibition (2013) http://www.blackwell.org.uk/exhibitions/bodil-manz
• “Like a moth to the flame,” by Paul Leathers. Article about Ann-Charlotte Ohlsson’s Canadian residency with description of her background and motivation for work. http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Like+a+moth+to+the+flame%3A+Paul+Leathers+details+Ann-Charlotte...-a0348310760

Videos

• “Paying Honest Attention,” beautiful film about Danish potter Anne Mette Hjortshøj https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgumkcojbOM
• “Oval Teapots,” short film with Danish potter Anne Mette Hjortshøj discussing her teapot form https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cY1CQDIUkU
• “Anne Mette Hjortshøj “2012 Pottery Exhibition Invitation” at the Goldmark Gallery,” short video with curator and artist discussing work of Anne Mette Hjortshøj https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OhKyTZ1ZAJM&ebc=ANyPxKqt3qChdtuKv2KFYf80tftwLS-zJ1YFHgm8AH9nOojTJF-AP80jziyPrpvgYIBfeSX0lBmZtk5qLeI8vwUZgPR55Rww
• Tradition Transformed: Danish Ceramics in the Twentieth Century Curator discussing 2010 exhibition on Danish ceramics. Rather dry, but gives background information. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RP5IYY8QxWM
Websites

- Blog of gallery in Copenhagen showing contemporary studio ceramics run by leading Danish ceramist. History of images from past exhibitions.
  http://annlinnemann-english.blogspot.com/search/label/%20Anne%20Tophøj

- Blog page with examples of 20c. Danish ceramics. Nice images, but little contextual information.
  http://www.veniceclayartists.com/danish-pottery-ceramic-tradition/

- Online sales gallery for historic and contemporary Danish ceramics. No contextual information, but large number of online images,
  http://danish-art-pottery.dk/?id=172699

Contemporary Danish Female Artists & their Websites

- Bodil Manz
  http://bodilmanz.com

- Gütte Eriksen
  http://www.galeriebesson.co.uk/eriksen.html

- Gerd Hiort Petersen
  http://www.gerdoghans.dk/gerdhiortpetersen/ (in Danish)

- Ann Charlotte Ohlsson
  http://www.cassiusclay.dk/o2r0orwm70wmefp9tcswl977muep5x

- Anne Mette Hjortshøj
  http://www.cassiusclay.dk/o2r0orwm70wmefp9tcswl977muep5x

- Alev Ebüzziya Siesbye
  http://www.galeriebesson.co.uk/siesbye.html

- Ann Linnemann

Danish Ceramic Education Organizations

- Guldagergaard, International Ceramic Research Center
  An international ceramic research center in Skælskør, Denmark. Guldagergaard is the studio and research department of the Museum of International Ceramic Art with a renowned ceramic residency program.
  http://ceramic.dk

- Danish Museum Denmark. Site is in Danish, but some nice images of contemporary work.
  http://claymuseum.dk/museets-samlinger/erik-veistrup-samlingen/
Bowl Resources

Books

• A Potter’s Workbook, Clary Illian, whole book is useful but especially chapter “Bowls”
• Functional Pottery, Robin Hopper, whole book is useful, but especially pp. 133-137, 154-157,183-4
• Ceramics, Phillip Rawson, chapter “Expression of Shape.” Excellent but a bit esoteric book on ceramics. A classic for in-depth discussion.
• The Art of the Table, Suzanne Von Drachenfels, Chapter 7, “Bowls: Large to Small.” Discussion of different bowl forms, historic development of each form, and their use in dining.

Videos

• Simon Leach (grandson of Bernard Leach), “Trimming a bowl” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7NJTOZZ9MaY
• Ben Carter, “Excellent Advice for Not Trimming Through Pots” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_uXm3P49q4E
• Lorna Meaden, “How to Throw a Large Porcelain Bowl Without Collapsing it” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cb0-EwWfG1k
• “How to create a textured slab bowl over a plaster mold” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zrVjdGVE0Mw
• Kari Radasch, “How to Handbuild a Stacked Dish Using Bisque Hump Molds” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cUZcDEyuq3E

Articles

• Creating Forms with Hump Molds, Steve Howell http://ceramicartsdaily.net/booksales/ExtMoldTileHowell.pdf

Bowl Graphics

• Illustration of tea bowl shapes and feet http://flyeschool.com/content/japanese-tea-bowl-shapes
• Illustration of non-traditional feet on pinch bowls http://larkcrafts.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/feet1.png
Bowl Forms & Feet Types

Japan

Types of Foot

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Janome kōdai</th>
<th>Wa kōdai</th>
<th>Mikazuki kōdai</th>
<th>Tokin kōdai</th>
<th>Nijū kōdai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Snakes Eye</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Ring</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Crescent Moon</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Helmet</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Double Foot</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Uzumaki kōdai | Kaijiri kōdai | Takenoishi kōdai | Wari kōdai | Uwariyama | 突足 | Wari-ichiemonji | Kōdai |
|----------------|--------------|------------------|-------------|-------------|
| *Whirlpool* Foot | *Spiral Shell* Foot | *Bamboo Node* Foot | *Split Foot* | *Four Two* | *Split Foot* | *Four Two* | *Split Foot* |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bachi kōdai</th>
<th>Kiri kōdai</th>
<th>Kirinichimoni</th>
<th>Kugibori kōdai</th>
<th>Chirimien kōdai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Shamisen Plectrum</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Cut</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Cross Cut</em> Foot</td>
<td><em>Nail Carved Foot</em></td>
<td><em>Crimpled Cloth</em> Foot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Common Trimming Faults
Problems generally arise from trying to turn pots while the clay is in an inappropriate condition. If it is too soft, the process will cause the form to distort badly. If too dry, the pots will tend to be dislodged by the force needed to cut into the clay, ending up cracked or spoiled.

A classic example is illustrated below: the curve of the outside wall (A) does not follow the line of the interior. This creates an uneven thickness (B) and a weak point (C), where the pot may be cut through or left so thin that it may crack or slump in the kiln. The thickness and weight of the foot-ring make it too square (D) and bulky (E) in relation to the bowl’s size. Inside the foot-ring, the base has been trimmed too flat, again failing to follow the interior shape and causing a distortion (F).

Mark the base and outer wall of your bowl for trimming away excess clay to create the turning a foot-ring.
Bowl & Rim Profiles
Late Iron Age, Roman Pottery

Area L

1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
15
16

0 100mm
Online Lesson Plans

• Lesson plan on throwing and trimming bowls
  “Serving Bowls – Continuation or Completion
  http://ceramicartsdaily.org/education/college-level-ceramics-assignment-serving-bowls-continuation-or-completion/

• Lesson plan on hump molded bowl with stamps
  “Making an Impression,” Nancy Zoller

• Empty Bowl Rubric
  http://www.slideshare.net/ColleenDowling/empty-bowls-41972467

Contemporary Minnesota-ish Potters who make bowls from the NCC Collection

• Lisa Buck
  https://lisabuckpottery.com

• Guillermo Cuellar
  http://www.guillermopottery.com

• Mike Helke
  http://mikehelke.com/home.html

• JD Jorgenson
  http://jdjorgensonpottery.com/home/

• Warren MacKenzie
  http://warrenmackenziepottery.com

• Alleghany Meadows (not MN, but great bowls)
  http://www.art-stream.com/exhibiting-artists/alleghany-meadows/

• Steve Rolf (Western WI)
  http://www.scrolfpotter.com/index.html

• Pete Scherzer (formerly MN)
  http://petescherzerpottery.com/home.html
## Decorative Materials

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Decorative techniques</th>
<th>Stage applied</th>
<th>Can combine with...</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Low/Mid/High Fire</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Slip</strong></td>
<td>Colored liquid clay that is decoratively applied to the surface of a pot</td>
<td>• Slip trailing&lt;br&gt;• Mishima/inlay&lt;br&gt;• Paper resist/stencils&lt;br&gt;• Sgraffito</td>
<td>leather hard</td>
<td>• underglazes&lt;br&gt;• washes/stains</td>
<td>Commercial or individually mixed</td>
<td>Changes the color of the pot; used with many decorative techniques</td>
<td>Formulated for low, mid, and high fire. Need to use slip that corresponds with clay body and firing temp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engobe</strong></td>
<td>Similar to slip but has more flux (melter). “Engobe” often used as synonym of “slip.”</td>
<td>• Same applications as slip</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Underglaze</strong></td>
<td>Can be used under clear glaze; can be used like slip; can be used on top of texture and wiped off</td>
<td>• Brush on wipe-off stamps/impressions&lt;br&gt;• Paper resist/stencils&lt;br&gt;• Brush onto bisque surface (under the glaze)</td>
<td>leather hard, bone dry, or bisque</td>
<td>• washes/stains&lt;br&gt;• slip</td>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>Consistent; commercially available; bright colors</td>
<td>All work at low-fire. Most at mid-fire. Some darker colors work at high-fire but need to be tested.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Washes/Stains</strong></td>
<td>Metallic oxide or Mason stain combined with flux + water</td>
<td>• Brush on wipe-off stamps/impressions&lt;br&gt;• Brush on top of raw glaze (over the glaze)&lt;br&gt;• Brush onto bisque surface (under the glaze)</td>
<td>bisque; can be applied to bone dry work but takes more skill</td>
<td>• slip&lt;br&gt;• underglazes</td>
<td>Individually mixed in 1:1 ratio of Flux:oxide/Mason stain + water</td>
<td>Emphasizes texture/impressions; strong color that will impact glaze color</td>
<td>Will work at any temperature and is not temperature specific.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Terra Sigillata</strong></td>
<td>Finest particles of clay applied in layers and burnished to get glossy sheen</td>
<td>Good for raku, pit firing</td>
<td>bone dry</td>
<td>• slip can be applied over terra sigillata so glossy/matte contrast like Maria Martinez</td>
<td>Individually mixed</td>
<td>Lightly seals surface; glossy sheen and doesn’t cover up clay; historic connection</td>
<td>Low-fire only</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Decorative Surface Material Definitions

**Slip/Engobe**

*Material:* A homogenous mixture of clay and water. Decorative slip differs from slurry used for joining pieces or produced in the process of throwing. Decorative slips are usually mixed from a recipe and have more flux (melter) than a slurry-slip which is just clay + water. They also often have a colorant added. “Engobe” is often used synonymously with “slip,” but technically, an engobe has more flux than a slip as sits between a slip and a glaze. Slip recipes are designed for specific temperatures (low, mid, high-fire) so that they melt in-unison with the clay body. Therefore, it is important to make sure you choose a slip that corresponds to your clay body and firing temperature.

*Source:* Slips are commercially available pre-mixed or in powdered format. Casting slips are different from decorative slips in they have a deflocculant added which makes the slip behave differently. While it is possible to use a casting slip to decorate, it can cause problems, and it is probably best to purchase only a true decorative slip for classroom use. It is much cheaper to mix a slip by measuring recipe of dry chemicals than to purchase it pre-mixed. This is easy if you have a gram scale, and there are many recipes online for decorative slips at every temperature.

*Mixing:* Slips can be the same color as a clay body or they can be colored with oxides or Mason Stains to create a color that contrasts with the clay body. The most often used slip is a white slip to cover a red, low-fire, terra-cotta clay body in order to get a white ground. To mix a slip, measure ingredients, add water, sieve, let stand for 24 hours for full water saturation. To mix colored slips, start with a white slip recipe and add Mason Stains or metallic oxides to the slip base. To get light pastel color, add 5% Mason Stains. To get a more saturated color, add up to 20% Mason Stains. Metallic oxides can also be added to color slip, however, the percentages vary from oxide to oxide. In general, oxides are much stronger than Mason Stains and should be used from 2-6% in slips.

*Use:* Slips are used with a variety of decorative techniques, including sgraffito, slip trailing, paper resist/stenciling, and inlay/mishima.

*Application:* Slip is usually applied to leather-hard ware before it is bisque fired. There are slips recipes designed to be applied to bisque ware, but they have to be specially formulated for shrinkage. Common examples of these are “flashing slips” applied to bisque ware for wood firing.

Artists often manipulate the consistency of slip through adding a deflocculant or flocculant. This will affect the look of the slip after it is applied. A few drops of saturated solution of epsom salts and water can be added to a slip to flocculate or thicken it. Darvan 7 or Sodium Silicate can be added to a slip recipe when it is initially mixed to deflocculate it or make it appear fluid without adding a lot of water.

**Wash/Stain**

*Material:* A solution of a metal oxide and water. Often a flux is added to this mixture to help with melting and adhering to clay body.

*Source:* Not commercially available, but easy to mix by hand.

*Mixing:* Mixed by measuring 50/50 by volume (1 tsp./1 tsp.) of metallic oxide/Mason Stain to flux. For a flux, most people use Gerstley Borate, Gillespie Borate or Frit 3124. Water is added to the powdered chemicals until it is fluid and brushable.

*Use:* Can be used to highlight impressed designs and create color contrast. Wash/stain is brushed on surface and sponged off so it remains only in recessed areas. Also used in combination with glazes to create color variation or used with brush to paint an image. Washes/stains are very strong concentrations of colorants and in many ways can be used as a very strong underglaze. Washes/stains can also be used over glazes. A common technique is brushing a rutile stain over Tenmoku (iron saturate glaze) to create an amber line.

*Application:* May be used under or over a glaze. Usually used on bisque ware but can be used on green ware if careful. Washes are very strong and concentrated. If used too heavily, all washes/stains will look black regardless of the color. Because the metallic oxides are very concentrated, you should always use gloves when handling washes/stains.
Underglaze

Material: Underglazes are an oxide(s) combined with a small amount of flux (melter) that binds them to the clay body and integrates them with the glaze. Underglazes also have gums added to them which make them very brushable. Underglazes gain their full color with the ‘wetting’ action of the covering glaze.

Source: Commercially available. Purchased wet-mixed in 4 or 16 oz. bottles from ceramic supplier.

Use: Underglazes are used for their intensity, a wide range of color, and stability of that color. They are most often used as low temperatures (cone 04), but some colors (darker colors with cobalt, chrome, copper as dominant oxide) are still effective at cone 10 temperatures. Underglazes are used much like slips to add color to a ceramic surface. They can also be used instead of stains/washes to highlight impressed designs. They can also be used in a painterly way and combined with other colors (although it is often hard to tell the intensity and hue of the color before firing).

Application: Underglaze can be applied to pieces before or after bisque firing. They should be applied under a glaze (not on top). They are a very uniform and stable decorative material and the raw color you see is dull but similar to the fired color. Often, several layers of brushed underglaze are needed to get an opaque and uniform color. Underglazes are often used in classroom settings because they are commercially available, easy to use, come in a broad range of colors, provide an intense saturated color, can be applied to both green and bisque ware, and are easy to clean up. However, they are expensive!!

Terra Sigillata

Material: A liquid suspension of the finest particles of clay that is applied to a bone dry pot. If polished or burnished just after application, may give a high gloss. Acts as a seal or porous clay, making it less prone to absorb moisture. All ancient Greek red-black pottery, Roman red wares, and most Native American pieces were finished with terra sigillata, without the use of glaze. Many contemporary potters who work in earthenware use terra sigillata to seal the foot of their pots.

Source: Individually mixed. Not available commercial. To mix = deflocculant + wet + dry materials, blunge, let sit for 2-3 days, siphon off fine-particle mixture. The color of the terra sigillata is determined by the color of the clay used. Most terra sigillata are red, buff or white. However, white terra sigillata (mixed from EPK or OM4 ball clay) can be tinted by adding Mason Stains.

Use: Does not make a piece food safe nor vitreous. Does not work above cone 04 since the molecular structure changes at high fire, destroying the glossy sheen. Does not work under a glaze but will be dissolved by glaze over it. Terra sigillata works very well with pit/sawdust firing techniques.

Application: Apply to bone dry clay. Usually 3+ coats are needed. Often burnished with a rock, spoon or cloth to help get sheen. Burns out at cone 04 and above.