

# Crafting the Classroom



Integrating Visual and Tactile Learning  
into Core Subjects

## **How to Use *Crafting the Classroom***

Houston Center for Contemporary Craft (HCCC) is a nonprofit arts organization founded to advance education about the process, product and history of craft. HCCC's major emphasis is on objects of art made primarily from craft materials: clay, fiber, glass, metal, wood or found/recycled materials.

Each *Crafting the Classroom* lesson teaches a science, math, social studies, or language arts objective, and a corresponding craft-based art project. Through integrating art into the core subjects, these lessons are designed to increase student engagement with the objective, promote higher order thinking and creative expression, and provide tactile learners with opportunities to excel.

Use these lessons to connect craft with topics that are meaningful to your students and curriculum. For example, many tools, vessels, furniture, clothes, and other items integral to daily life used to be made by hand. Learning about these objects, as well as the skills needed to make and use them, can be a unique way to study world history or other cultures. Replicating decorative patterns can give students a better understanding of geometry. Learning about how craft materials are made and used relates to chemistry, physics, and natural science. These are just a few of the connections that can be made.

Pair these lessons with a visit to Houston Center for Contemporary Craft, where your group can enjoy a free guided tour, visit the craft garden, and observe resident artists in their studios. Optional, hands-on workshops are available upon request.

Please share these plans with other teachers, parents, and administrators.

**For more information about HCCC, or to schedule your visit**, please visit our website at [www.crafthouston.org](http://www.crafthouston.org) or call 713-529-4848 Ext. 0

### **Leah Hamilton French**

Volunteer Manager & Education Coordinator

[lfrench@crafthouston.org](mailto:lfrench@crafthouston.org)

713.529.4848 ext. 0

### **Houston Center for Contemporary Craft**

4848 Main Street  
Houston, TX 77002

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Putting the finishing touches on a tooled leather cover.

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Written by Leah Hamilton French

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## BOOK LIST: CRAFT IN FICTION AND NON-FICTION

### OBJECTIVES

**English Language Arts:** Students will understand that books and text are used to communicate ideas and information. Younger students will gain familiarity with the different parts of a book, and the connection between spoken words and written text.

Students will read and respond to a fiction or non-fiction text. Students will retell or summarize the main idea and key details of a non-fiction text, or the plot and sequence of events for a fictional story. Students will acquire new vocabulary about craft and craft processes, and use new vocabulary when reading and writing. Students will ask relevant questions, seek clarification, and locate facts and details about stories and other texts. Students will support answers with evidence from the text they have read. Students will identify the text as fiction or non-fiction, and discuss how they determined this.

**Fine Arts:** Students will learn about the history, process, and/or cultural significance of different craft traditions through reading a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction.

**Social Studies (optional, text dependant):** Students will learn about the daily life and rituals of another culture or time period, through reading a fiction or non-fiction text about a craft process from that culture or time period.

**Science (optional, text dependant):** Students will learn about the natural world and/or chemical and physical processes used to locate and refine various craft materials, such as clay, wood, glass, metal, fibers, and/or plastics.

*Relating to all craft media: **Fiber, Wood, Clay, Metal, and Glass***

### WHAT'S INCLUDED IN THIS LIST

- **Books for Students:** Picture books, non-fiction books, and some chapter books about craft materials, artists, and/or processes. These are organized by:
  1. Clay
  2. Wood
  3. Fiber
  4. Metal
  5. Glass
  6. Other - books about craft in general, or more than one type of craft
- **Books for Teachers:** Books containing ideas for projects teachers can do with students. Resource books for teachers to learn about various craft traditions.
- **Reading Response Templates:** Reading response templates for fiction and non-fiction texts.

## SUGESTIONS FOR USING THIS LIST

Use the books in this list however they best fit into your curriculum, whether as a read aloud to introduce a new art project or social studies unit, or as supplemental reading for students who are interested in learning more about a particular craft.

Here are some themes that crop up frequently in this book list:

- **Biography** – famous craft artists and their contributions to history and community
- **Colonial American history** – professions and daily life
- **Native American history and culture** – weaving and pottery of the Southwest, carving of the Northwest, and basketry of the Northeast
- **Pioneer American history** – daily life and the role of handmade objects
- **Quilting** – in the African American tradition
- **Quilting** – as community and memory

## 1. CLAY

### Picture Books About Clay and Ceramics

#### **Fiction**

*Clay Boy* by Mirra Ginsburg

*The Ball of Clay that Rolled Away* by Elizabeth Lenhard

*The Clay Ladies* by Michael Bedard

*The Fire Children* by Eric Maddern

*The Mud Pony* by Caron Lee Cohen

*The Pot That Juan Built* by Nancy Andrews-Goebel

*The Willow Pattern Story* by Allan Drummond

*When Clay Sings* by Byrd Baylor

#### **Non-Fiction**

*Children of Clay: A Family of Pueblo Potters* by Rina Swentzell

*Dave the Potter: Artist, Poet, Slave* by Laban Carrick Hill

*Etched in Clay: The Life of Dave, Enslaved Potter and Poet* by Andrea Cheng

*Maria Martinez: Pueblo Potter* by Peter Anderson

*The Potters (Colonial Craftsmen)* by Leonard Everett Fisher

### Chapter Books About Ceramics

*Maria Montoya Martinez: Master Potter* by Elsie Kreischer

## 2. WOOD

### Picture Books About Wood and Wood Crafts

#### **Fiction**

*Daniel's Duck* by Clyde Robert Bulla

*El regalo del leñador/The Woodcutter's Gift* by Lupe Ruiz-Flores

*Elijah's Angel: A Story for Chanukah* by Michael J. Rosen

*Miguel and the Santero* by Sandra E. Guzzo

*Peter's Chair* by Ezra Jack Keats

*The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey* by Susan Wojciechowski

*The Decoy* by Nathaniel Lachenmeyer

#### **Non-Fiction**

*The Woodworkers (Colonial People)* by Bobbie Kalman

*Wood (Exploring Materials)* by Abby Colich

*Wood (Materials)* by Cassie Mayer

### Chapter Books About Wood Crafts

*The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi (Abridged)

*Totem* by Jennifer Maruno

## 3. FIBER

### Picture Books About Fibers and Fiber Arts

#### **Fiction**

*A New Coat for Anna* by Harriet Ziefert

*Abuela's Weave* by Omar S. Castañeda

*Annie and the Swiss Cheese Scarf* by Alana Dakos

*Belle, the Last Mule at Gee's Bend* by Calvin Alexander Ramsey

*Charlie Needs a Cloak* by Tomie de Paola

*Extra Yarn* by Mac Barnett

*Mooshka: A Quilt Story* by Julie Paschhkis

*Oma's Quilt* by Paulette Bourgeois

*Sam Johnson and the Blue Ribbon Quilt* by Lisa Campbell Ernst

*Shall I Knit You a Hat?: A Christmas Yarn* by Kate Klise

*Stichin' and Pullin': A Gee's Bend Quilt* by Patricia McKissack

*Sweet Clara and the Freedom Quilt* by Deborah Hopkinson  
*Tar Beach* by Faith Ringgold  
*The Chief's Blanket* by Michael Chanin  
*The Goat in the Rug* by Charles L. Blood and Martin Link  
*The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco  
*The Mitten* by Alvin Tresselt  
*The Mitten* by Jan Brett  
*The Name Quilt* by Phyllis Root  
*The Patchwork Path: A Quilt Map to Freedom* by Bettye Stroud  
*The Patchwork Quilt* by Valerie Flourney  
*The Quilt* by Ann Jonas  
*The Quilt Story* by Tomie De Paola and Tony Johnston  
*The Quiltmaker's Gift* by Jeff Brumbeau  
*The Quiltmaker's Journey* by Jeff Brumbeau  
*The Rag Coat* by Lauren Mills  
*The Secret to Freedom* by Marcia Vaughan  
*The Truly Terrible Horrible Sweater That Grandma Knit* by Debbie Macomber  
*The Weaver* by Thatcher Hurd  
*Weaving the Rainbow* by George Ella Lyon  
*Woolbur* by Leslie Helakoski  
*Yetsa's Sweater* by Silvia Olsen

### **Non-Fiction**

*Faith Ringgold (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists)* by Mike Venezia  
*From Cotton to T-Shirt* by Robin Nelson  
*From Sheep to Sweater* by Robin Nelson  
*Gee's Bend Quilts* by Carole Marsh  
*More Quilts From the Quiltmaker's Gift* by Joanne Larsen Line  
*Paper (Exploring Materials)* by Abby Colich  
*Paper, Paper, Everywhere* by Gail Gibbons  
*Fine Print (A Story about Johan Gutenberg)* by Joann Johansen Burch  
*Quilts From the Quiltmaker's Gift* by Joanne Larsen Line  
*Songs from the Loom: A Navajo Girl Learns to Weave* by Monty Roessel  
*The Quilt-Block History of Pioneer Days (With Projects Kids Can Make)* by Mary Cobb  
*The Quilting Bee* by Gail Gibbons  
*Warm as Wool, Cool as Cotton: Natural Fibers and Fabrics and How to Work with Them* by Carter Houck  
*Weaving A California Tradition: A Native American Basketmaker* by Linda Yamane

### **Chapter Books (Fiction) About Fiber Arts**

*Gathering Blue* by Lois Lowry  
*Happy Birthday, Kirsten: A Springtime Story* by Janet Beeler Shaw  
*Homeless Bird* by Gloria Whelan  
*Ink on His Fingers* by Vernon Louise  
*Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes* by Eleanor Coerr  
*The Butterfly Basket* by C.A. Waldman  
*The Quilt* by Gary Paulsen

## 4. METAL

### Picture Books About Metal and Metal Arts

#### **Non-Fiction**

*A Day in the Life of a Colonial Blacksmith* by Kathy Wilmore  
*Arms and Armor (DK Eyewitness Books)* by DK Publishing  
*Metal (Exploring Materials)* by Abby Colich  
*Metals (Rocks, Mineral, and Resources)* by John Paul Zronik  
*The Blacksmith (Colonial People)* by Bobbie Kalman  
*The Silversmith (Colonial People)* by Wil Mara  
*The Silversmiths (Colonial Craftsmen)* by Leonard Everett Fisher  
*The Story of the Statue of Liberty* by Betsy and Giulio Maestro

- See also the DK Eyewitness series (listed under “Other Books About Craft”) for books about the metal jewelry and weapons of several ancient civilizations.

### Chapter Books About Metal Arts

*Catching the Fire: Philip Simmons, Blacksmith* by Mary E. Lyons  
*The Bravest Blacksmith* by Thomas S. Owens

## 5. GLASS

### Picture Books About Glass

#### **Non-Fiction**

*A Day in the Life of a Colonial Glassblower* by J.L. Branse  
*Craft It: Hand-Blown Glass* by Madison Spielman  
*Fire Into Ice: Adventures in Glass Making* by James Houston  
*Glass (Exploring Materials)* by Abby Colich



*Glass (Materials)* by Cassie Mayer

*Hot Gobs! The Art of Glassblowing* by Modern Curriculum Press

*The Glassblower (Colonial People)* by Christine Peterson

### **Chapter Books About Glass**

*Shadows in the Glasshouse* by Megan McDonald

*The Glassblower's Children* by Maria Gripe

## **6. OTHER BOOKS ABOUT CRAFT**

### **Books About Colonial Crafts**

*Colonial Crafts (Historic Communities)* by Bobbie Kalman

*Home Crafts (Historic Communities)* by Bobbie Kalman

### **Historical Fiction**

The semi-autobiographical **Little House series by Laura Ingalls Wilder**, especially *Little House in the Big Woods* and *Little House on the Prairie*, include many detailed descriptions of the pioneer characters making clothes, furniture, tools, and toys by hand. These books, as well as other historical fiction, can be an engaging way for students to learn about the daily life of Americans.

### **DK Eyewitness Books**

The DK Eyewitness Series is a non-fiction series for children. Each book focuses on a different topic or region of the world, providing a wealth of facts, photos, and illustrations. Their books about native cultures and ancient civilizations, a sample of which are listed below, include information about the handmade metal, glass, wood, fiber, and clay objects unique to those communities.

*Africa* by Yvonne Ayo

*Ancient Egypt* by George Hart

*Ancient Greece* by Anne Pearson

*Ancient Rome* by Simon James

*Medieval Life* by Andrew Langley

*Mesopotamia* by Philip Steele

*North American Indian* by David S. Murdoch



### **Books About Historic Artisans and Craftsmen**

David Macaulay's books (listed below) about the construction of historic buildings and monuments can be an interesting way for students to connect craft with history (both social and technical history). Because these buildings were constructed long before modern machinery, the woodworkers, stonemasons, and carvers who worked on them were skilled craftsmen who had perfected their techniques over many years.

*Castle* by David Macaulay

*Cathedral* by David Macaulay

*City: A Story of Roman Planning and Construction* by David Macaulay

*Mosque* by David Macaulay

*Pyramid* by David Macaulay

### **RESOURCE BOOKS FOR TEACHERS**

#### **Projects and Activities:**

*African Crafts: Fun Things to Make and Do from West Africa* by Lynne Garner

*Folk Art Projects: Around the World* by Jill Norris

*Folk Art Projects: North America* by Yvonne Despard

*Hands-on America* by Yvonne Y. Merrill

- *Volume 1: Art Activities About Vikings, Woodland Indians, and Early Colonists*
- *Volume 2: Art Activities About Colonial America, African-Americans, and Southeast Indians*
- *Volume 3: Art Activities About Lewis & Clark, Pioneers, and Plains Indians*

*Hands-On Asia: Art Activities for All Ages* by Yvonne Y. Merrill

*The Crafts of Florida's First People* by Robin C. Brown

*The Great Clay Adventure: Creative Handbuilding Projects for Young Artists* by Ellen Kong

*You Can Weave!: Projects for Young Weavers* by Kathleen Monaghan

#### **Further Reading:**

*Pottery of the Southwest: Ancient Art and Modern Traditions* by Carol Hayes

*Storytellers and Other Figurative Pottery* by Douglas Congdon-Martin



*The Art of Gaman: Arts and Crafts from the Japanese Internment Camps 1942-1946* by Delphine Hirasuna

*The Quilts of Gees Bend* by William Arnett and Alvia Wardlaw

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>NON-FICTION READING RESPONSE TEMPLATE</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	
<b>What is the <i>topic</i> of this book? (What is it about?)</b>	
<b>What is one thing you learned while reading?</b>	
<b>What is one question you still have after reading?</b>	
<b>Make a connection between what you learned in this book, and something you have experienced, or something you have read about in another book.</b>	

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

FICTION READING RESPONSE TEMPLATE	
<b>Title:</b>	
<b>Author:</b>	
<b>Who are the main characters in the story?</b>	
<b>What happened in this story?</b>	
<b>Beginning:</b>	
<b>Middle:</b>	
<b>End:</b>	
<b>Did you like it? Circle One:</b>   	<b>Why, or why not?</b>          

**Draw a picture of something that happened in the book:**

