

# Fiber Clay Creatures!

Using Sheepdog Fiber Clay  
From New Mexico Clay



[www.nmclay.com](http://www.nmclay.com) 800 781-2529

## Sculpting a Creature with Fiber Clay

By Brant Palley, New Mexico Clay

(Grade Level: High School)

**Objectives:** The Student will learn about fiber clay construction, we will experience the advantages of Fiber clay (sheepdog Cone 04) over regular clay and over more traditional paper clay; we will construct a creature from premade, bone dry, body parts. The assembly is with slip and wet clay. The classroom advantages are obvious, you don't have to worry if the sculpture (or coiled pot) has dried out because you can add on, and even cut off! You can get a project done in 30 minutes. Read more on [www.fiberclay.com](http://www.fiberclay.com)

Learn of Rosette Gault and Graham Hay from Australia.

Use the slip and denture cream method of attaching bone dry to bone dry clay pieces together that holds together adequately.

### Materials:

- Pre made pieces (legs, arms, necks...)
- 2- lbs orange sized pieces of clay per student
- Water container for slip
- Plastic Forks, Tongue Depressors, Cloth for covering tables.
- Sheepdog Fiberclay from New Mexico Clay

### References:

Present visuals of Artwork by artists such as Rosette Gault and Graham Hay.

Rosette Gault <http://www.paperclayart.com/>

Graham Hay. <http://www.grahamhay.com.au/>

Discuss the medium clay, what it is made of and introduce clay vocabulary words such as fire, kiln, and paper clay.

### Procedure:

Demonstrate how to attach bone dry clay to both bone dry clay and wet clay using the slip and denture cream method. Paint slip on all surfaces to be bonded, take a small piece of wet clay and wet it with slip, smush everything together. Roll out clay to form the body of the sculpture, attach the legs to the body, fabricate a head out of wet clay and attach to a neck, attach that to the body. When dry bisque fire to cone 04, decorate with Concepts underglazes for bisque or glazes and fire to cone 06.

Let the students make their own creatures; don't show them what we are going to make in advance. Sculpting is about creative inventing, not copying.

When using the clay, the students learned about dry to dry slab construction.

Clean –up the workspace.

**Assessment:**

Observe students as they work. Ask:

- Who are the artists we talked about today?
- What are the three words to describe the processes of attaching bone dry clay?
- What is clay made out of?

**Vocabulary:**

Clay, Fire, Kiln, Ceramic, paper clay, fiber clay, 3- Dimensional, Form, Sculpture,

**Modifications:**

Instead of making a clay animal you can build a dry armature then drape wet clay slabs over it.

**Cross-curricular Extensions:**

Talk about the fact that fiber in clay is as old as the pyramids of Egypt. Adding straw to clay makes it hold together and resists cracking. Adobe is used all over New Mexico and traditionally used some form of fiber.

APS Visual Arts Standards Addressed (pre 2010)

- Standard 1: Learners will enhance artistic perception and visual and tactile awareness.
- Standard 3: Learners will develop critical thinking skills, analytical skills, and artistic perceptions through observing, comparing and contrasting, and discussing a variety of art.
- Standard 4: Learners will use visual art as a means of self-expression
- Standard 5: Learners will develop qualities, attitudes, and behavioral attributes through visual art experiences that contribute to continuous personal growth.



### Paperclay sculpture by Graham Hay

Emerge II (2003/13)

ceramic earthenware and Terracotta paperclay

21 x 20 x 21 cm

Photo: Victor France

Purchased by Mark and Mary Greenshield



A Love Bird Soars in My Body Sky by Rosette Gault (USA) 2008 Limoges Royal Copenhagen Porcelain paperclaybase made in Denmark 2008