

SANDY SIMON

For an intermediate or advanced throwing class.

1. I have procured several menus from area restaurants and had the students draw from a hat. The menu that they drew is the food for which they will design a dinner set for eating it from. They can also handbuild or slip cast their product.
2. Another one for the same level of class is to have them draw from a hat of well known potters or clay artists. They go to the library and research the persons work and do an oral report for the rest of the class. This works even better if you give them the option of choosing their artists to work on. They need visual documentation , slides or pictures from the sources.
3. If students have access to a museum, I have had them choose a piece in the museum and do their best to copy it exactly. I think this is a good exercise, but they don't get real enthusiastic about it. But the good part is it necessitates their looking hard at an object.
4. For a throwing class I've had them weigh out clay for a soup size bowl and make 20 of them all with different lips and feet combinations. I feel it shows them the infinite possibilities and if people get bored with throwing, it is for reasons other than the limitations of the wheel.
5. I've had them build a room from slabs (1st assignment for a beginning class) and put some things into it that reflect what they like and do. It can be real or imaginary. Most students do a great job on this, and it can be very personal.

Beginning Ceramics

A great idea for the first day of beginning ceramics I got from Lynn Chytilo is to put objects in a brown bag (unseeable) and have students feel it and build what they think they feel.