

# Mexican Bowl

from the book *Step-by-Step Papier Mâché* by Judy Balchin

This lesson plan is inspired by the brightly colored pottery of Mexico. For thousands of years, the art of forming and decorating hand-built vessels has played an important role in Mexican culture, and many of the techniques employed by ceramicists today were developed by these ancient artisans. This simple papier mâché version casts paper pulp into a textured bowl using an existing plastic or ceramic bowl as a mold. Once dry, the bowl can be painted with traditional Mexican patterns and symbols or decorated with a design chosen by the student. The finished artwork is not intended for functional use and will not be waterproof.

**Grade Levels** K-4

## Process

1. Line the inside of a bowl with cling film. Prepare paper pulp or Sculptamold according to directions. Press paper pulp into the bowl with your fingers. When it is about 1/4" thick, smooth the surface with your fingers.
2. Use the end of a paintbrush to make holes around the bowl. Try to make the spaces between the holes roughly equal. Leave to dry for three hours.
3. Carefully lift the pulp shell out of the bowl using the cling film. Place on a cooling rack; leave to dry for at least 24 hours.
4. Prime the bowl with gesso. Leave to dry. Paint the outside of the bowl with colored acrylic paint. Let dry.
5. Paint the inside of the bowl a different color. Let dry.
6. Tie a knot in the leather cord and attach three beads. Thread it through one of the holes in the bowl. Tie a knot on the inside, then cut off the end of the cord. Repeat around the bowl using the rest of the length of cord.

## National Standards

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.

### K-4

Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

Content Standard #3 — Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas

### K-4

- Students select and use subject matter, symbols and ideas to communicate meaning

Content Standard #4 — Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

### K-4

- Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times and places



Step 1



Step 3



Step 4 and 5



Step 6



## Materials

Assorted Plastic Beads  
(60726-1005)

Imitation leather cord, 24"  
(61514-1005)

Bowl

Plastic wrap or cling film

Paper pulp or Sculptamold  
(33104-1003)

Blickrylic Gesso (00711-1059)

Blickrylic Student Acrylics,  
assorted colors (00711-)

Blick Economy Golden Nylon  
Brushes, classpack of 72,  
(05157-0729)

Cooling rack for air drying

Step-by-Step Papier Mâché book  
(68611-1011)