

GLAZED ALCOHOL-INK TILES

Teacher: Julien Tomasello
Title: Glazed Alcohol-Ink Tiles
Class Length: 3 - 5 class periods with class critique included (40 min per)
Grade Level: Lower to Upper School (Grades 2 – 12)

Brief History/Background:

The history of decorative tiles is long and colorful. Early examples can be found in: **Egypt** (circa 4700 BC) where ceramic tiles are believed to have been developed. Ancient Egyptians created and used decorative tiles to beautify temples, the outside and inside of homes, and public baths; **Morocco** creates tiles using a gray-colored clay called **Fez**. **Zellige** is a type of tile design popular in Morocco which consists of colored tile pieces that are cut into specific shapes to create **symmetrical** and **geometrical** patterns. Morocco has a large **Muslim** population. According to the Muslim holy-book, the **Quran**, the depiction of holy figures and some animals is not permitted. This is one reason for the development and popularity of the **Zellige** design. Moroccan tiles can be found on the inside walls of homes, on tables tops, fountains, public baths, and on the outside and inside of **Mosques** which are holy buildings of worship for Muslims. In the **United States**, ceramic tiles are commonly found in and around places of residence such as bathrooms, kitchens, pools and patios. As in other countries, tile usage in the United States is both **functional** and **decorative** because they repel moisture, are easy to clean, and act as a cooling device in warm weather, while simultaneously adding **color**, **pattern**, and **texture** to surfaces.

Essential Questions:

1. Why do you think ceramic tiles were (first) developed and so popularly used in African countries?
2. How does the geography and climate of the African continent contribute to the early development and continued popularity of ceramic tiles?
3. Describe how ceramic tiles are both functional and decorative?
4. What are some of the elements and principles of art & design found in decorative tiles?

PA Standards:

- 9.1.8.A. Know and use elements and principles of each art form to create works in the arts.
9.1.8.K. Incorporate specific uses of traditional and contemporary technologies in furthering knowledge and understanding in the humanities.
9.2.8.A. Explain the historical, cultural, and social context of an individual work in the arts.
9.2.8.D. Analyze a work of art from its historical and cultural perspective.
9.2.8.E. Analyze how historical events and cultural impact forms techniques and purposes of works in the arts.
9.2.8.G. Relate works in the arts to geographic regions: Africa, United States.

Goal: Students will create a series of 5 glazed alcohol-ink tiles that demonstrate a building of skill, the development of a technique(s), and overall experimentation with the project's materials, tools, and standard process. I wish to see evidence of student's exploration of color, pattern, design, and process.

Objectives: Students will:

- Learn a partial history of the ceramic tile – it's origin and differentiation of uses and design in Africa and the United States.
- Connect why geography and climate were/are responsible for ceramic tiles' development and continued use in Africa.
- Connect the development of *Zellige* to Muslim religious belief (Quran).
- Understand the definitions of: *Fez, Zellige, Functional Art, Decorative Art.*
- Build skill with color design and pattern-making via *Alcohol Inks, Isopropyl Alcohol* and *tools.*
- Recognize the importance and impact of *color, shape, value, pattern, contrast, emphasis, balance, and rhythm* in this tile decoration process.

Requirements: There are no prior requirements for students.

Resources/Visual Aids: *Galzed Alcohol-Ink Tiles* Powerpoint presentation. Tile exemplars.

Supplies/Materials: White, glazed, ceramic tiles (approximately 4 x 4"); Isopropyl Alcohol, Colored Alcohol Inks (one set of colors for each student work group), Cotton Balls, Cotton Swabs, Small Spray Bottles, Small Bowls, Clear Gloss Sealant, Sponge Brushes, Colored-Sharpie Markers, Table Coverings, Tile Drying Station. Tile display easels (optional). Charts (or Powerpoint slides) listing lesson assignment, objectives, and rubric.

Teacher Preparation: Set-up demo station and student-group work stations. Display exemplars, project objectives, and rubric (if non Powerpoint). Prepare Powerpoint presentation.

Teaching Class One [Introduction]: Present Powerpoint. Divide class into small working groups of approximately 4 students each. Conduct glazed alcohol-ink tile demonstration. Review project assignment, objectives, and rubric. Field Questions. Time permitting: students begin work on tiles.

[Conclusion]: Announce activity and goal for next class: students begin work on their series of glazed alcohol-ink tiles.

Teaching Class Two [Introduction]: Review information covered in class one.

[Lesson]: Class begins work on their individual tile series. Assist students as needed.

[Conclusion]: 10 minutes before bell: cleanup, place tiles at tile drying station. Review activities of the class. Field questions, difficulties, concerns. Announce activity and goal for next class: continue work on tiles.

Teaching Class Three [Introduction]: Ask class for feedback (likes, difficulties) with the lesson. Announce to class today is the last day to work on their series of tiles.

[Lesson]: Class begins work on their individual tile series. Assist students as needed.

[Conclusion]: 10 minutes before bell: cleanup, place tiles at tile drying station. Review activities of the class. Field questions, difficulties, concerns. Announce tomorrow is tile glazing day.

Teaching Class Four [Introduction]: Demonstrate proper tile glazing technique to class.

[Lesson]: Class collects their tiles from the drying station and begins glazing. Once each tile is complete, glazed tiles are returned to drying station. Assist students as needed.

[Conclusion]: 10 minutes before bell: cleanup, place remaining tiles at tile drying station. Review activities of the class. Field questions, difficulties, concerns. Announce tomorrow is tile critique day!

Critique/Evaluation/Assessment:

Elements & Principles of Design (30%)

Creativity & Originality (20%)

Effort & Perseverance (20%)

Craftsmanship/Skill/Consistency (20%)

Group Cooperation/Attitude (10%)

Homework: There is no homework for this project.

Adaptations/Modifications for ELL and Special Needs Students:

Safety Concerns: General studio safety. Inks are alcohol-based. Glaze may be harmful.

Bibliography/References:

History of ceramic tiles: <https://jandatiling.co.uk/blog/history-ceramic-tiles/>

Ancient Egyptian Tiles:

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/wml/collections/antiquities/ancient-egypt/item-384261.aspx>

<http://pippacachia1.blogspot.com/2013/05/ancient-egypts-tiles-and-patterns.html>

Moroccan Tiles:

<https://mosaicmorocco.com/history-lesson-moroccan-tiles/>

https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aniconism_in_Islam