

## LESSON PLAN 2: Lebes Gamikos Vessel - Hunt Museum



The Lebes Gamikos is an Ancient Greek wedding vessel. 4th Century BCE. This pot carried water for the bride to use for a special bath.

*From the Collection at the Hunt Museum.*

### **Resources included in this lesson plan:**

- 1** A short stop-motion video that:
  - Describes the Lebes Gamikos and what it was used for
  - Gives information about daily life in ancient Greece
  - Describes how pot shapes varied depending on function
  - Describes sgraffito, a decorative technique used by ancient Greeks on clay
- 2** A short demonstration video of a local ceramic artist demonstrating how the technique of sgraffito is accomplished on a clay tile.
- 3** A short video of a teacher in a classroom delivering the sgraffito lesson plan to the class, and the results.
- 4** What's the story? A looking and responding activity which includes a list of questions and printable hexagonal mosaic pieces.
- 5** A short instruction video on how to make slip, to complement the written instructions.
- 6** A short instruction video on how to score and add slip during the clay construction activity.



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### STUDENTS ARE LEARNING:

- Low, middle and higher thinking skills to find out how this object was used in Ancient Greece
- Visual literacy skills to interpret the imagery depicted on this vessel
- Basic pottery construction and decoration processes used by Ancient Greeks
- To use sgraffito decoration technique to create a new design

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

### STUDENTS WILL BE SUCCESSFUL WHEN THEY CAN:

- Explain the different ways pottery was used in Ancient Greece
- Explain how Lebes Gamikos was used in wedding celebrations in Ancient Greece
- Apply new vocabulary to explain how Lebes Gamikos was made and decorated
- Produce a 2D piece of art using basic sgraffito technique

### CURRICULUM LINKS:

*Visual Arts:*

*Strands:*

Developing form in clay

Looking and responding.

*Social, Environmental and Scientific Education:*

*History:*

*Strands:*

Working as a historian, story; myths and legends, early people and ancient societies, life society work and culture in the past, continuity and change over time.

### KEY SKILLS:

- Develop and awareness of form and shape
- Rolling clay to make a tile
- Using a range of tools to make a variety of marks in dried clay





## STEP BY STEP INSTRUCTIONS FOR TEACHER:

### Sgraffito on tile with air drying clay and poster paint

- Roll out the air dry clay flat to create a tile - size optional
- Trim to a square (or desired shape) - possibly use a paper template for speed
- **Option 1:** Paint a layer of poster paint on the tile, repeat 2/3 times until the surface is opaque
- **Option 2:** Use the coloured clay slip instead of the poster paint to brush on the tile. Again repeat the layers until the colour is opaque
- Leave to dry - overnight if possible
- When dry to the touch, you can start to create the surface decoration on the tile  
Sgraffito is the technique that we are using
- Use either cocktail sticks, fork, knife, old credit or plastic cards which have been cut to create a sharp edge to mark the pattern on the tile
- The drier the surface of the tile - the sharper the image will be



## WHAT'S THE STORY? TELLING THE STORY OF THE OBJECT...

### INFORMATION ABOUT ACTIVITY:

#### 1. What's the story? Looking and responding activity.

Pupils to use hexagonal shapes to write answers to questions provided. Use these to create a story map mosaic on a wall or desk. Question the object/deconstruct meaning/come up with research questions about it. Pupils may decorate their shapes as they wish to make a colourful story mosaic.



### LOOKING AND RESPONDING:

#### QUESTIONS

- Look at the figures on the vase: who are they? What are they doing?
- How old are you?
- Where do you come from?
- Who made you?
- How were you made?
- Why were you made?
- Are you important?
- Who used you?
- What were you used for?
- How are you used now?
- Why have you been kept this long?
- Why do you live in the Hunt Museum now?
- Are you beautiful?
- How are you decorated?
- Are you part of a set?
- What sort of things lived around you?
- What sort of things live around you now?

### TEACHERS NOTES:

#### *Looking and Responding:*

- **Look at the figures on the vase: who are they? What are they doing?**

*One of the figures is Eros God of love, the other seems to be a woman holding a tray – pupils may come up with their own conclusions as to who this figure is*

- **How old are you?** *Comprehension of the information from the lesson*

- **Where do you come from?** *Understanding maps shown and information from the lesson*
- **Who made you?** *Comprehension from the lesson, using detective skills to consider who in society was the maker of the piece under discussion*
- **How were you made?** *Answers to include new vocabulary to describe ceramic processes*
- **Why were you made?** *Be able to describe the purpose of the object based on information from the lesson, using detective skills and imagination to describe why this object was made*
- **Are you important?** *Pupils to discuss if/why the object is important, why and to whom*
- **Who used you?** *Using detective skills and information for the lesson to describe this person*
- **What were you used for?** *Using information from the lesson and detective skills to describe the object's use*
- **How are you used now?** *Understanding the importance of being on display in a museum/Gallery, using their imagination*
- **Why have you been kept this long?** *Using their imagination and detective skills to consider how much care it takes to preserve fragile items for 1000s of years*
- **Why do you live in the Hunt Museum/Limerick Museum/LCGA?** *Considering/discussing why objects are kept on display and why*
- **Are you beautiful?** *Observing the objects carefully. How long did it take to make? Does it look nice? Would you have this in your house?*
- **How are you decorated?** *Observing carefully. What processes have been described in the videos. Use new vocabulary to answer this*
- **What sort of things lived around you?** *Using knowledge of context of the piece describe other objects/people/places around the object. If it was kept on a shelf; what was beside it on the shelf. Was it on the ground? In a house or some other building?*
- **What sort of things live around you now?** *Using imagination and knowledge of context around the object, describe what lives next to this object now. Are they the same things as 2000 years ago?*

## TO MAKE AIR DRY CLAY SLIP (SLURRY)

- Shred small pieces of fresh air dry clay - a small cupful, and place in a plastic bowl
- Add approx 2/3 tablespoons of water and leave overnight with a tight lid
- Next day stir gently adding more water if needed. Let it sit for 24 hours, with the lid on
- After at least 48 hours, the mixture can be repeatedly stirred to create a smooth creamy texture
- This is now ready to be used as a 'glue' to bind air dry clay sections together
- If colour is required, divide the mixture equally into 3/4 separate lidded pots, depending on how many colours are needed
- Add either poster paint or acrylic paint to each pot in very small amounts at first. Stir well until the colour emerges. The more colour that is added, the brighter and deeper the tone will be
- Colours can be mixed together as well, such as blue and yellow to make green. Small colour tests are advised before adding to the slip



