



# Kusama Ceramic Pumpkin Lanterns

Developed with Renee Marvin | Grades 4-6  
Time: Four, 54 min. classes

## objectives

*Students will...*

- Be able to understand the materials and processes associated with ceramics art and use in a safe and responsible manner
- Be able to understand that polka dots, repetitive patterns, bright colors, reflection, and infinite space often mark the work of Kusama
- Be able to recognize Kusama's piece "All the Eternal Love I Have for the Pumpkins" and understand that it is an example of an installation
- Create an individual ceramics lantern and display their work together as a collaborative piece



## standards

**VA:Cr1.1.3a** — Elaborate on an imaginative idea.

**VA:Cr1.2.3a** — Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the art-making process.

**VA:Cr2.1.3a** — Create personally satisfying artwork using a variety of artistic processes and materials.

**VA:Cr2.2.3a** — Demonstrate an understanding of the safe and proficient use of materials, tools, and equipment for a variety of artistic processes.

**VA:Cr3.1.3a** — Elaborate visual information by adding details in an artwork to enhance emerging meaning.

**VA:Pr4.1.3a** — Investigate and discuss possibilities and limitations of spaces, including electronic, for exhibiting artwork.

**VA:Pr5.1.3a** — Identify exhibit space and prepare works of art including artists' statements, for presentation.

**VA:Pr6.1.3a** — Identify and explain how and where different cultures record and illustrate stories and history of life through art.

**VA:Re7.2.3a** — Determine messages communicated by an image.

**VA:Re8.1.3a** — Interpret art by analyzing use of media to create subject matter, characteristics of form, and mood.

**VA:Re9.1.3a** — Evaluate an artwork based on given criteria.



## introduction

Introduce the artwork of Yayoi Kusama through images and videos. Look at and study several examples and videos of her installations. Discuss the difference between sculpture and installation.

A sculpture is a self-contained form meant to be viewed from the outside.

An installation is a piece of artwork that is often site specific. It is often interactive and involves the viewer and the perception of the space.

# instructions

## day 1:

Students will be creating pumpkins using the pinch pot method. In their planning composition, have them incorporate the use of repetitive dots as a design element on their piece. Keep in mind that some of the details will need to be carved out of the form for light to shine through in order to create a glowing effect at the end of the project.







## day 2:

Construction of the pinch pot pumpkins.

1. Roll out two clay spheres similar in size.
2. Press into the center of a clay sphere using your thumb. Gently pinch around the rim to form a small pot. Repeat this step with the additional sphere.
3. Attach the two pots together with the score and slip method to form the body of the pumpkin.
4. Use tools to create texture and the pumpkin sections on the surface of the pumpkin.
5. Form and attach the stem and other details of the pumpkin using more clay. Do not forget to use the score and slip method when attaching pieces.
6. Carve out a space large enough for a battery-operated tea light. Have one available for students to test. Most of the students carve the space at the bottom of the pumpkin. Remind them that clay shrinks a little as it dries, so they will need to make the space larger to anticipate it shrinking.
7. Add the final touches. Provide several different size marker lids that students can use to create dots and punch out holes in their projects if they desire.



## day 3:

After the projects are fired, the students will glaze their pieces. Limit to three colors.

## day 4:

After the final firing, battery-operated tea light candles can be added to the pumpkins to see the sections that were carved out.





# create

## a collaborative display

This example shows an infinity box inspired by Kusama's infinity rooms. To achieve this, glue mirrors to the interior walls of a crafted box.

Give students time to view and photograph their miniature interactive installation.

## conclusion

Review by asking students a higher level thinking question such as, "Describe how to create a ceramic pinch pot pumpkin from the perspective of the clay."



## materials

- Nasco White Earthenware Clay – 8300160
- Mayco® Stroke & Coat® Kit 1 Classic, set of 12 pint bottles – 9718087
- Mayco® Stroke & Coat® Kit 3 Brights, set of 12 pint bottles – 9719292
- Hole Cutters, set of 4 – 9722073
- 8" Double-End Ribbon Tools, set of 6 – 9704984
- Royal Brush® Mini Sculpting Tools, set of 10 – 9733198
- Art Utility Cups and Lids, pkg. of 25 - 3¼ oz. – 9708984
- Royal Brush® Big Kids Choice™ Combo Brush Value Set – 9742724

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