PINCHED SLAB ORNAMENTS

This project is great for any age and will help students develop clay hand building skills. Ask students about their favorite winter holiday or special shared memory with family or friends. They can use these memories as inspiration for their ornament. This is a great opportunity for students to share individual cultural traditions.

Start with an idea and make paper templates. Students can create their own or pick from a selection of pre-made templates. Shapes with parts smaller than 1/2” may be difficult to cut and keep intact as clay dries.

MATERIALS
- Paper
- Scissors
- Clay
- Glaze
- Hole Cutter
- Knife or Pin Tool

PROCESS
1. Start by rolling a small ball of clay between your hands.

   For longer shaped ornaments start with a coil or oval shaped lump of clay.

2. Press the ball of clay between your palms or press down onto table to slightly flatten the ball.

3. Starting in the middle make even pressure pinches while rotating and slowly moving outward. If starting with a coil start pinches at one end and work down the coil.

4. When the slab is sufficiently pinched set it down flat on a table.
5. Lightly tap slab with the palm of your hand a few times to compress the clay and help it stay flat while drying.

7. Let clay dry to just before leather hard. The clay should hold its form when moved but have a little give.

**CUTTING OUT SHAPES**

1. Once clay has stiffened to leather hard trace templates onto pinched slab.

2. Cut out shapes using either a pin tool or knife.

3. Pick up slab and lightly pinch the edges of the shape to give them a finished look.

4. Use a hole cutter to create a hole for a ribbon or string. Fire ornaments to bisque and glaze.