

# MONA

Museum of Northwest Art

## Sticks & Stones Sculptures Inspired by Philip McCracken

A HANDS-ON ART  
ACTIVITY DESIGNED BY  
MONA EDUCATORS

**Age:** Preschool to Kindergarten

**Lesson Duration:** 1 hour

**Subjects:** Nature and Sculpture



Image: Student example

### Description

This lesson is about working like a sculptor and building art that can be seen from all directions. This activity is inspired by sculptor Philip McCracken from the Pacific Northwest. McCracken is known for his bird, animal and natural material sculptures. We will think like Philip McCracken as we make our own sculptures today!

### Materials

- Collected sticks & stones
- Cardboard base
- Ball of air dry clay
- Image of Philip McCracken's sculpture, *Hornet's Nest* (large version included at the end of this lesson)



Image credit: *Hornet's Nest*, Philip McCracken



## Instructions

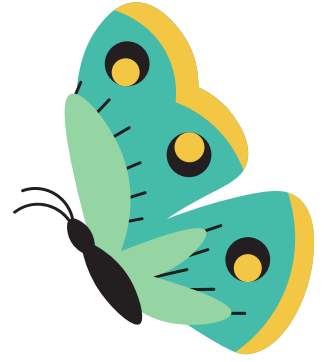
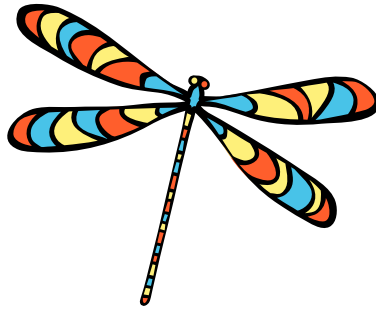
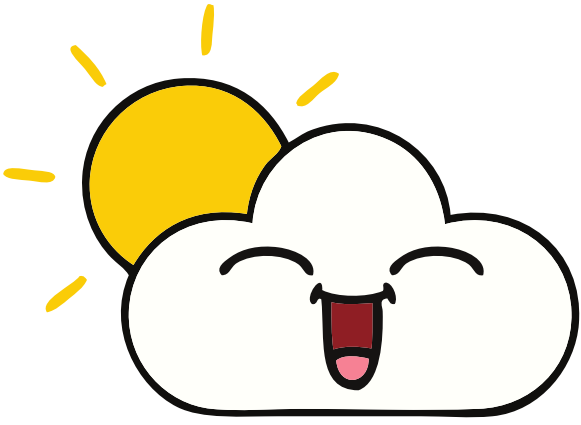
- Watch [the video with Howard Shapiro](#) to get you started.
- Look at the image of Philip McCracken's sculpture, *Hornet's Nest*, to get some inspiration.
- Go outside on a nature walk to collect your materials for your sculpture. Be careful not to disturb nature while you find sticks and stones. For example, you don't want to pick branches off trees because it might make it so that next year's buds can't grow in the spring. Maybe sticks will come from the ground under a favorite tree.
- Choose things that are small but strong so it's easy to build something that won't fall apart. Hunt for smooth stones that make a nice collection.



**Some sticks still have needles still growing on them.**

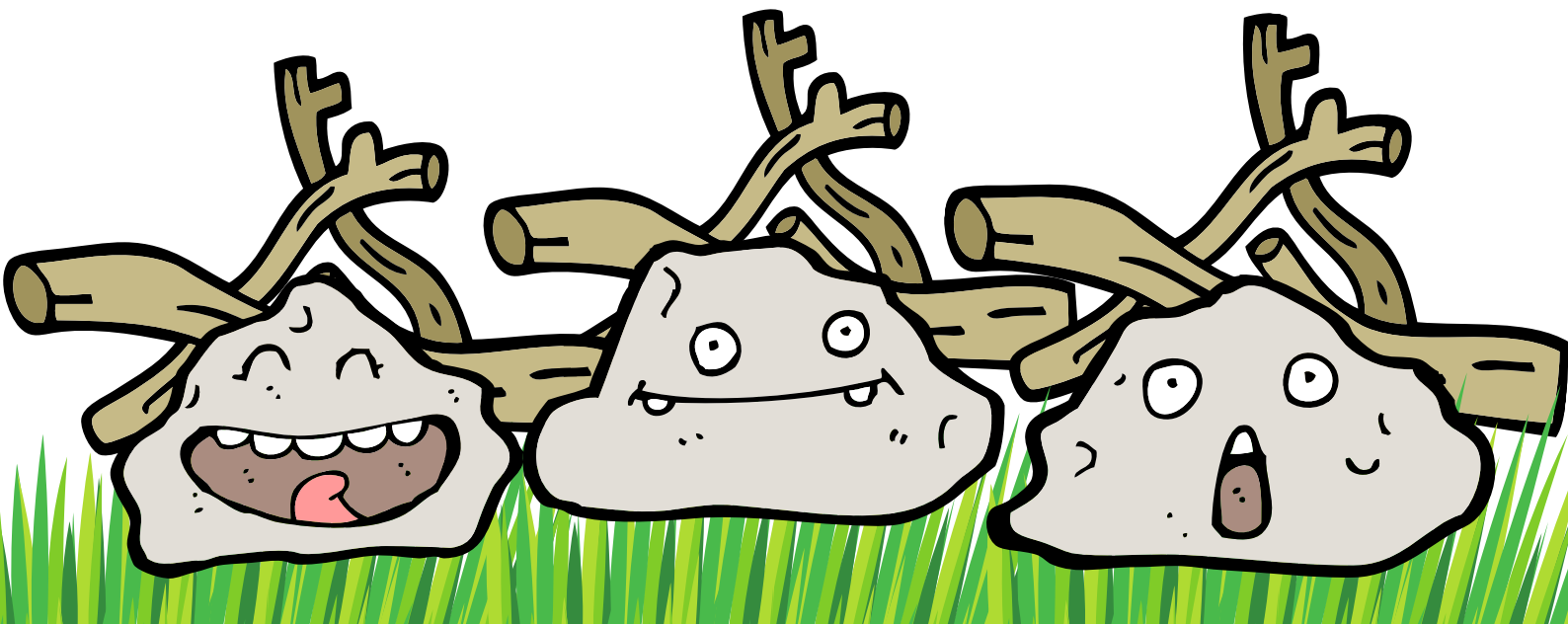
**Do you know the name of the plant that made the sticks?**

**Fir trees don't lose their thin needle leaves. Maple trees lose their leaves every fall. Do you like the way your stick smells? Choose sticks that are small, but strong enough to build with.**



## After your nature walk...

- Bring your sticks and stones inside.
- Use the cardboard and air dry clay to make a base for your sculpture.
- Make an arrangement.
- Take it apart and rearrange it.
- Build again.
- Repeat until you have a sculpture you like.
- Give it a title and display to remind you of your nature walk.



# Examples of some possibilities...



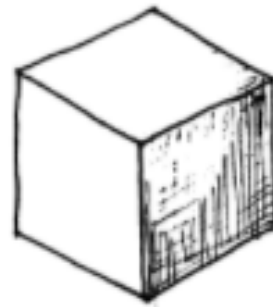
SPHERE



CYLINDER



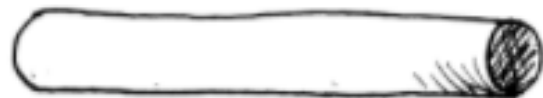
CUBE



SLAB

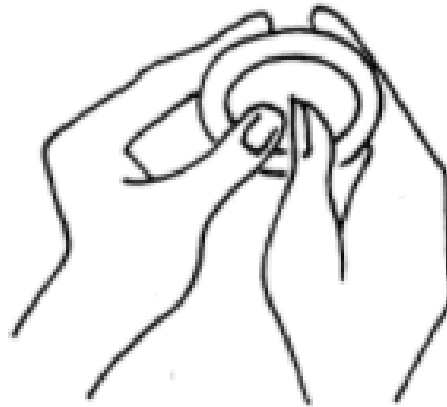


COIL

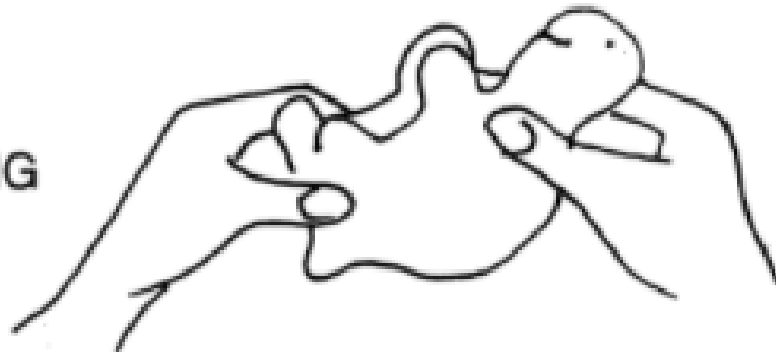


# CLAY BUILDING TECHNIQUES

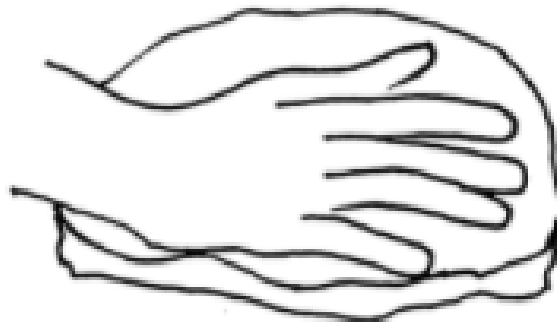
PINCHING



MODELING



SLAB



COILING

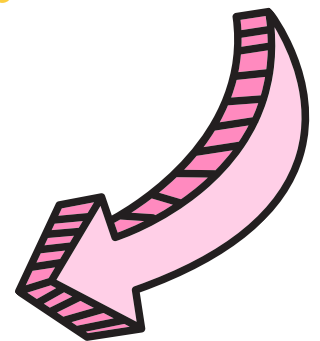


# Washington State Arts Learning Standards

- **VA:Cn10.1.Pk** Explore the world using descriptive and expressive words and art making.
- **VA:Cr1.1.K** Engage in exploration and imaginative play with materials.
- **VA:Cr1.2.Pk** Engage in self-directed, creative art making.
- **VA:Cr2.1.Pk** Use a variety of art making tools.
- **VA:Cr2.3.Pk** Create and tell about art that communicates a story about a familiar place or object.
- **VA:Cr3.1.Pk** Share and talk about personal artwork.
- **VA:Pr5.1.PK** Identify places where art may be displayed or saved.
- **VA:Re7.2.K** Describe what an image represents.



Don't forget to send a picture of your finished art work to the museum for sharing at [education@museumofnwart.org](mailto:education@museumofnwart.org)





*Image credit: Hornet's Nest, Philip McCracken*