

Students As Designers

These standards are examples that demonstrate authentic connections for deepening student learning and understanding. Please note that the lessons can be adapted to cross grade levels and subject areas. ([Note to Educators](#))

Partnership for 21st Century Skills

Learning and Innovation Skills: Communication and Collaboration

- Articulating thoughts and ideas clearly and effectively through speaking and writing

Learning Activity-Elementary and Secondary

Students will view portions of the documentary, *Alabama Craft: Tradition and Innovation*, dedicated to the work of Cal Breed (see the Digital Media Resources section below.) As a glassblower, Breed is celebrated for the expertise of his work and the beauty of the pieces he creates (to view his work samples click on Work Samples below.) Students will observe Breed as he designs and produces glassware. In small groups they will analyze how he uses heat and breath to blow the glass into various shapes and vessels. They will predict the possible outcomes of his work. What must he do to keep the piece on the blowing rod? How might he shape a bowl vs. a vase? How might he create ribbons of color in his pieces?

Learning Activity-Elementary and Secondary

Cal Breed designs and creates one-of-a-kind glass pieces that can be ornamental or functional. Like all the artists profiled in the documentary, he is affected by what he sees and experiences around him. These influences are often brought to life in his work.

Students are to imagine that they are a glass artist. Individually, or in groups, they will discuss the types of designs they would create (either functional, ornamental, or both) and give reasons for their choices. They will reflect on ideas, thoughts and experiences that could influence their creations. The teacher can facilitate their discussions by asking them to recall their favorite place, happiest memory, etc. How could they reflect these experiences in their creations? Would they use specific colors or shapes? Would they create a special item or design? They will draw and color their designs using pencils, crayons or markers, or they may construct their designs using other materials (clay, fabric, etc.). Students will explain their creations to the class, detailing the functions of their designs, the colors, patterns, and shapes chosen, and the reasons behind their choices. Drawings and creations will be displayed.

Alabama Courses of Study

Visual Arts Standard-Grades 7-12/Level I

- 2.) Create original works of art using reflective ideas, personal experiences, and imaginary content.

English Language Arts Standard-Grade 7

- 9.) Compose in descriptive, narrative, expository, and persuasive modes with a thesis sentence and introductory, supporting, and concluding paragraphs when appropriate.

Learning Activity-Elementary and Secondary

From among all the designs displayed, students will select one that is interesting to them. Each will write a (descriptive) essay describing their chosen design in detail **without telling who created the design**. Class members will listen to each essay and determine from the clues in the description which design is reflected in the essay. Reasons for choices will be shared.

Additional Learning Activity: After viewing the entire documentary and additional materials, students will determine the type of craft artist they would like to be (quilter, glass blower, potter, etc.) and why. They will follow all steps in the preceding activities (see above), creating, sharing, and displaying. They will select a design that interests them and write a descriptive essay. Class members will guess which design is reflected in each essay. Reasons for choices will be shared.

Digital Media Resources

Cal Breed

- [Interview](#)
- [Demonstration](#)
- [Work Samples](#) (Slides 7-11)

Additional Resources

- Southern Artistry www.southernartistry.org
- Orbix Hot Glass (provides additional biographical information and work samples) www.orbixhotglass.com
- Tradition Innovation (see "For Educators" section-*Glass*) www.traditioninnovation.org
- www.pbs.org (see "PBS Kids Go-glass blowing")
- [Definitions](#)
- [Supplemental Activities and Lesson Ideas](#)
- [Teacher Resources](#)