



Common areas where students may need attention and how to help them

Hello and congratulations for taking the lead as a soapstone instructor to your students. We hope you will be having as much fun as we do when we teach our workshops across classrooms in Canada and the US.

You may be one of those teachers who have been having us in their classrooms for years or you may have never even tried carving yourself. In both cases you are probably wondering how am I going to guide my students, though this class, what if they make a mistake and I don't know how to help them? Rest assured that our program is designed for success and if you follow the instructions, we provide everyone will be able to achieve results they are happy with.

However, during our years in the classrooms, we have identified areas where students sometimes need extra support. Here we would like to share our tips and tricks of how you can encourage and help your students along the way.

Common area 1- Rounding the body

Often times students need extra encouragement during the first step which is rounding of the body. After five minutes or so some of them feel they are ready, but the stone shape still has all of its square edges. Encourage them to:

- *Use their muscles and push harder on the edges when they file them away.*
- *Talk what is a round shape. Make them touch their own forearms and feel how their body doesn't have edges, so don't the animals' bodies!*



- *Make sure the file is positioned right on top of the edges and not on the side of their animal shape. They should see how the sides of the animal's body are becoming more and more round as they work with the file.*



- *Make sure they round out the legs, chest and belly of the animal (if applicable)*

- *Remind them to carve all around the body and shape all sides equally. Some students tend to focus on only one side or body part in making it perfectly round. Unfortunately, when it is time to move on to the next step, they are left with all of the remaining edges and the shape still looks blocky.*



Common area 2- The Nose/ Snout/ Beak

The nose area is one of the trickiest parts and often times students make mistakes there. It is very helpful to talk about the face first and even look into some visual references of the animals before you start carving the noses. Point to the students how the nose/ snout/ beak is narrow and right in the middle of the animal's face, just like our human faces. The key here is to make frequent stops and reflect on if the shape is going in the right direction. Help them be careful about:

- *Carving a little bit at a time and constantly alternate in between the two sides of the face so they don't end up with a crooked nose. Sometimes when we teach, we encourage the children to count to five or ten when carving on one side, then switch to the other side and count the same number. After they should stop and check the face to see how much more stone they need to remove.*



- *They should make sure the tip of the nose is slimer then the base. Yes, we have seen it many times where children are carving on an angle and end up with very wide tip and thin base of a nose. If this starts to happen, they should carefully remove stone from the tip only until the shape is corrected.*
- *Be careful to NOT make the nose too slim. If the nose is carved very slim it might break easily. This applies for the tail of the Orca as well!*



Common area 3-Legs

Students sometimes forget to carve the groove in between the legs and in this way fail to divide them into two separate legs. It is helpful to remind them to:

- *Carve a groove going up the legs so there are notably two legs and not just one. They don't need to go too high up the body though. As long as they are able to recognize there are two legs that's enough.*



- *They should NOT carve hind legs on the Wolf shape. The sitting wolf has its tail wrapped around his back legs so they don't need to be split in half.*



Important Tip

Show your students plenty of photos or videos of the animals they will be making prior to your carving session. You can find photographs and videos on our Facebook page.

The more visual references your students have the more they are familiar with the shapes they will need to represent in their sculptures. This is a key when creating any type of representational art piece.

Troubleshooting:

If a body part or the whole sculpture breaks for one reason or another you can glue it back on with clear Gorilla Glue or similar.

