

Paper Mache Bowl with Cultural Patterning



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Summary:

Students will learn the Recycle, Renew, Reuse in a way that is not only fun and good for the environment, but they can recycle material into an attractive aesthetic bowl that reflects cultural meaning.

Australian Curriculum Links:

Sustainability

Organising Ideas:

- OI 6. The sustainability of ecological, social and economic systems is achieved through informed individual and community action that values local and global equity and fairness across generations into the future.
- OI9. Sustainable futures result from actions designed to preserve and/or restore the quality and uniqueness of environments.

Lesson:

Introduction: Buying products that have had a [previous life](#), or have been made from parts which have been (or can be) recycled is a great way of reducing our impact on the environment. This lesson teaches students how to create a product made recycled content—materials that would have otherwise become waste.

Each student in the class will have a predominant source of cultural knowledge upon which they can draw for inspiration. They will be asked to make an aesthetic response when designing and decorating their bowls. Sharing cultural tradition is an important aspect of Visual Art. Students will engage in critique once the work has been created.

Body:

Materials for Paper Mache

1. paper for recycling – not waxy or highly polished
2. thick wallpaper paste or a paper mache preparation available from art supplies shops (Cell Mix)
3. petroleum jelly
4. plate or bowl for mould
5. brushes, knives, scissors,
6. buckets and containers, clean-up rags
7. paper and pencils for designs
8. poster paints, acrylic paints or water based paints
9. paintbrushes
10. clear spray varnish or a can of waterproof water based varnish

Instructions for Making a Paper Mache

1. wrap a dinner plate in plastic wrap. This will serve as your mould or template as you make your paper mache plates.
2. cover this with petroleum jelly so that the plate will lift easily from the plate or bowl
3. prepare paper mache glue
4. prepare your paper medium.

Although this project can be done with newspaper, students can also collect other strips of coloured and construction paper. Coated papers do not hold and absorb the paper mache glue.

Making the Paper Mache Form

1. rip or cut your paper into a series of 2- to 4-inch strips. Be flexible about the length as different sections of the bowl may require shorter or longer pieces.
2. dip each strip of paper into the paper mache glue
3. remove excess glue by sliding the strips through pinched finger
4. apply the strips of paper to the form in a criss-cross formation (this will give the structure strength)
5. when students have created and shaped the form leave it to dry

Decorating the Bowl

While waiting for the bowl to dry talk with students about their cultural back ground. Have them do an Internet search for ideas for cultural patterns. They may collect designs in collaboration with parents for homework.

Once the bowl is dry

1. lightly sand with very fine sand paper (to provide a smooth finish)
2. apply one or two coats of gesso (lightly sand in between coats)
3. paint one background colour with acrylic paint
4. draw on cultural pattern with light chalk
5. paint the design
6. one dry coat with varnish. (Spray Varnish works well)

Conclusion:

1. Once bowl is finished and polished conduct a classroom critique. Students are to explain the origins of their design and to discuss the aesthetics qualities.

Assessment:

- Group discussion: Which bowls work well? Why? (Possible answers a. sturdy b. finely sanded soft and smooth c. layers of paint are cover well, bright and attractive.)
- Short essay question What does Recycle, Renew, Reuse mean? How has this slogan been applied in this lesson?
- Write one sentence about a pattern from another culture that you have not seen before.

Resources:

- [Critique or Criticize?](#) This is the Crucial Question!
- Living Greener. [Re-used and recyclable products](#). Living Greener.Gov.au

If you like this lesson, or have an idea to improve it, please consider sharing it on Twitter and Facebook or leave a comment below.