PLANET ARK'S SCHOOLS RECYCLE RIGHT

Reuse Arts & Crafts Guide

A guide to turning waste materials into works of art, beautiful gifts or even musical instruments.

30 YEARS

NATIONAL RECYCLING WEEK

PLANET ARK

Getting started

INSPIRATION AND PRACTICALITIES

We hope that this guide will spark ideas for teachers and educators who want their students to learn about the importance of reusing and recycling resources for environmental sustainability – and who also believe that learning should be fun!

The projects in this guide vary in difficulty. You'll find projects that are suitable for students in preschool and primary school. We encourage you to adapt and amend the projects to suit the needs of your own students.

Finding materials for your activities

Each project in this guide has a list of required materials. Most projects require at least one recyclable item commonly found in the home, such as milk and juice cartons, plastic bottles, plastic containers, jars and cereal boxes. Ask your students to collect the necessary recyclable items from home.

Most of the projects also require materials for decorating. Ask your students to think creatively about what 'waste' or 'found' objects they can use. Examples include:

- Lolly wrappers
- Paper and cardboard scraps
- Spare buttons
- Used pens and crayon nubs
- Fabric offcuts or torn garments
- Magazines or catalogues

HOT TIP

Community re-use centres and 'tip shops' are also a great source of art and craft materials – you can often find textile offcuts, unwanted colour samples from paint manufacturers, beads, foam, cardboard, ribbons, cards and more!

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Desk Tidy

Materials

- A clean milk or juice carton, or a 2L plastic milk bottle.
- Scissors and glue.
- Assorted decorating materials, such as paint, magazines or newspaper, colourful paper, buttons.

Instructions

1. Cut off the top of the carton or bottle so you are left with an open container.*

2. Choose your decorations and plan out your design.

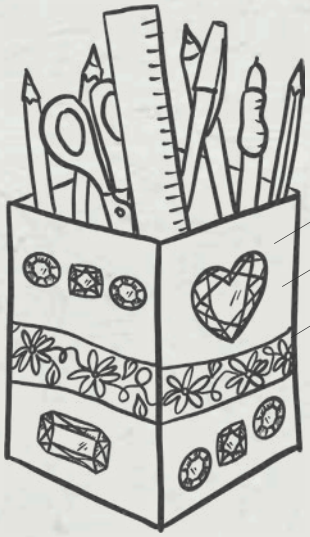
3. Glue or paint your decorations onto the container.

4. Allow to dry overnight.

5. Use your new, personalised, desk organiser. to store your stationary, or give it to someone as a handmade gift!

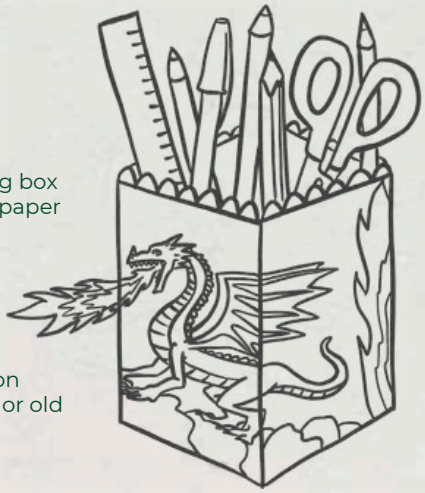
Inspiration

PET DESK TIDY



GLAM DESK TIDY

DRAGON DESK TIDY



Fridge Friend

Materials

- A flat, unwanted magnet like the ones you often get in your mailbox.
- Scissors, sticky tape and glue.
- Assorted decorating materials such as paint, magazines or newspaper, colourful paper, buttons.

Instructions

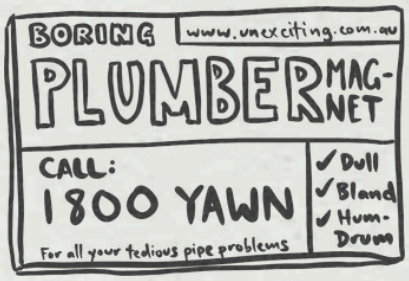
1. Choose your decorations and plan out your design.

2. Glue or paint your decorations onto the magnet. Keep in mind they can't be too heavy or the magnet will fall.

3. Allow to dry overnight.

4. Add to your fridge or give it to a friend as a handmade gift!

FROM THIS...



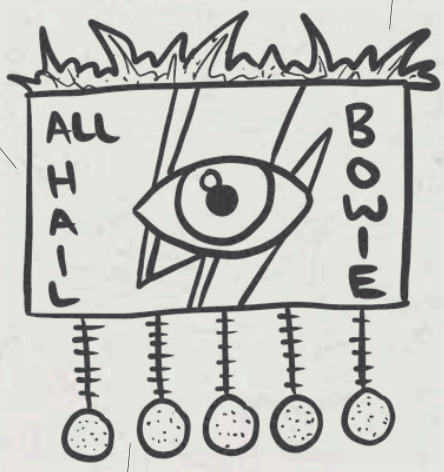
Plain paper

Picasso-style design with magazine cut-outs

TO THESE...

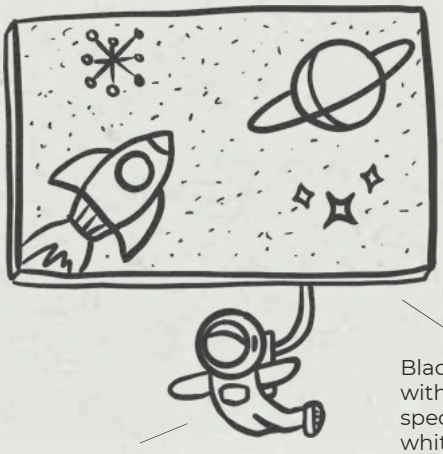
Fake hair made out of felt, fluffy offcuts or just cut from a magazine

Plain paper with drawn/cut-out design



Pompoms on string

Stars cut from silver paper or magazine



Black paper with glitter/ speckled white paint

Hand-drawn astronaut cut out from paper, or from a magazine, hanging from string, yarn or pipe cleaner

Castle Storage Box

Materials

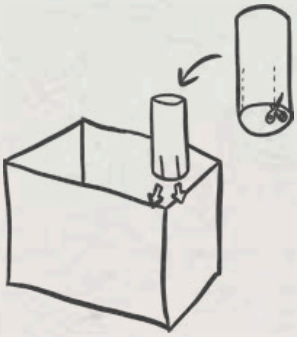
- A shoebox or small box (the lid isn't necessary).
- Four toilet paper rolls or paper towel rolls to make towers.
- Cardboard for the tower roofs.
- Scissors, glue and tape.
- Assorted craft materials e.g. paint, crayons, scraps of fabric, pictures from a magazine or catalogue, buttons etc.

Instructions

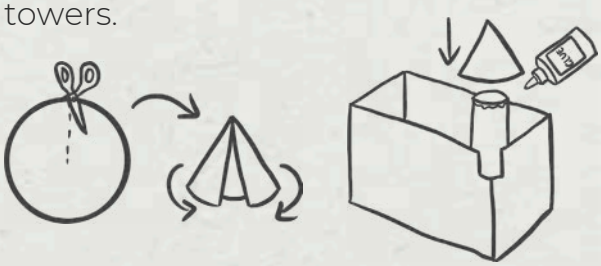
1. If you have a box with flaps that fold over the top to close the box, cut off the flaps so that you have an open-top box.

2. If you have paper towel rolls, place them in each corner of the box, standing up. Glue them into place.

3. If you have toilet rolls, you'll need to fix them to the top corners of the box. Take one toilet roll and cut two slits (about 5cm long) into end of the roll. Then push the roll on to the two sides of a corner of the box. Use tape if necessary to secure it in place. Do the same with the remaining toilet rolls.



4. Make four cones by cutting out four cardboard circles, cutting the circles halfway across and then curling them. Glue a cone on top of each roll to form the roofs of your towers.



5. Decorate your box like a castle, with a drawbridge at the front, windows on the walls, bricks, flags, etc.

Bonus Extra

Using toilet paper rolls, wool and scraps of paper, you could make some characters for your castle!

Bird Feeder

Materials

- A one-litre gable-top or fresh product carton is ideal.
- A thin stick, rod or a used pen.
- Scissors and glue.
- Paint and paintbrushes.

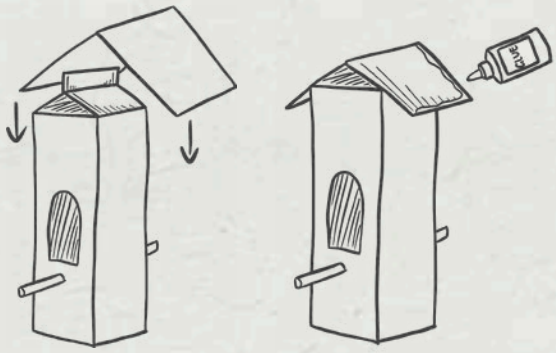
Instructions

1. Cut a small opening in the front and back of your gable-top carton. The bottom of the opening should be about 4-fingers-width above the bottom of the carton.

2. Make a small hole in the front and back of the carton, halfway between the bottom of the carton and the opening. Push your stick/rod/ pen through both holes, leaving a 'perch' on either side of the carton.

3. To make the roof of your bird feeder, cut open your UHT carton so that you can spread it out. Cut a rectangular shape from the carton. It's better to cut a large piece that you can trim down later than a small piece that won't cover the birdfeeder properly.

4. Bend the rectangle in the middle so that it's shaped like a tent with the silver foil on the outside. Place it on top of the gable-top carton so that it forms a roof and attach it with glue. You'll need to leave some overhang on your roof to protect the birdseed from rain.



5. Apply a small amount of glue to the edges of the roof. This will stop water seeping into the cardboard layer of the roof.

6. Decorate the outside of your bird feeder with paint.

7. At home, fill the bird feeder with birdseed and use string or wire to fasten it to the eaves of your roof, clothesline or another suitable place. It's a good idea to put bird feeders out in the open so that it's harder for cats or other predators to ambush the birds while they're feeding.

Stars & moon mobile

Materials

- UHT or long-life cartons with the silver lining inside.
- Scissors and glue.
- A pencil, pen or marker.
- String or yarn.
- Blunt darning needle, mathematical compass or a suitable tool to make holes for the string.
- A stick, rod, coat hanger or similar (you'll use it to suspend the stars and moon).

Instructions

1. Cut the cartons open and make sure the insides are clean and dry

2. Draw a star on the silver side of a carton. You can draw your own star or use the one on the next page as a template. Then, cut out your star.

3. Trace the outline of the star onto another piece of carton, then cut out your second star.

4. Glue the two stars back to back, so that the silver sides are on the outside.

5. Use a blunt darning needle, compass point or similar to punch a hole in one arm of the star. Thread a piece of string through the hole and tie a knot so that your star will dangle on the end of the string.

6. Repeat these instructions to make a moon, rocket ship, planet, etc. You might like to make additional big stars and little stars.

7. Tie the ends of the strings to your stick, rod or coat hanger.You might like to have your stars and moon hanging at different heights.

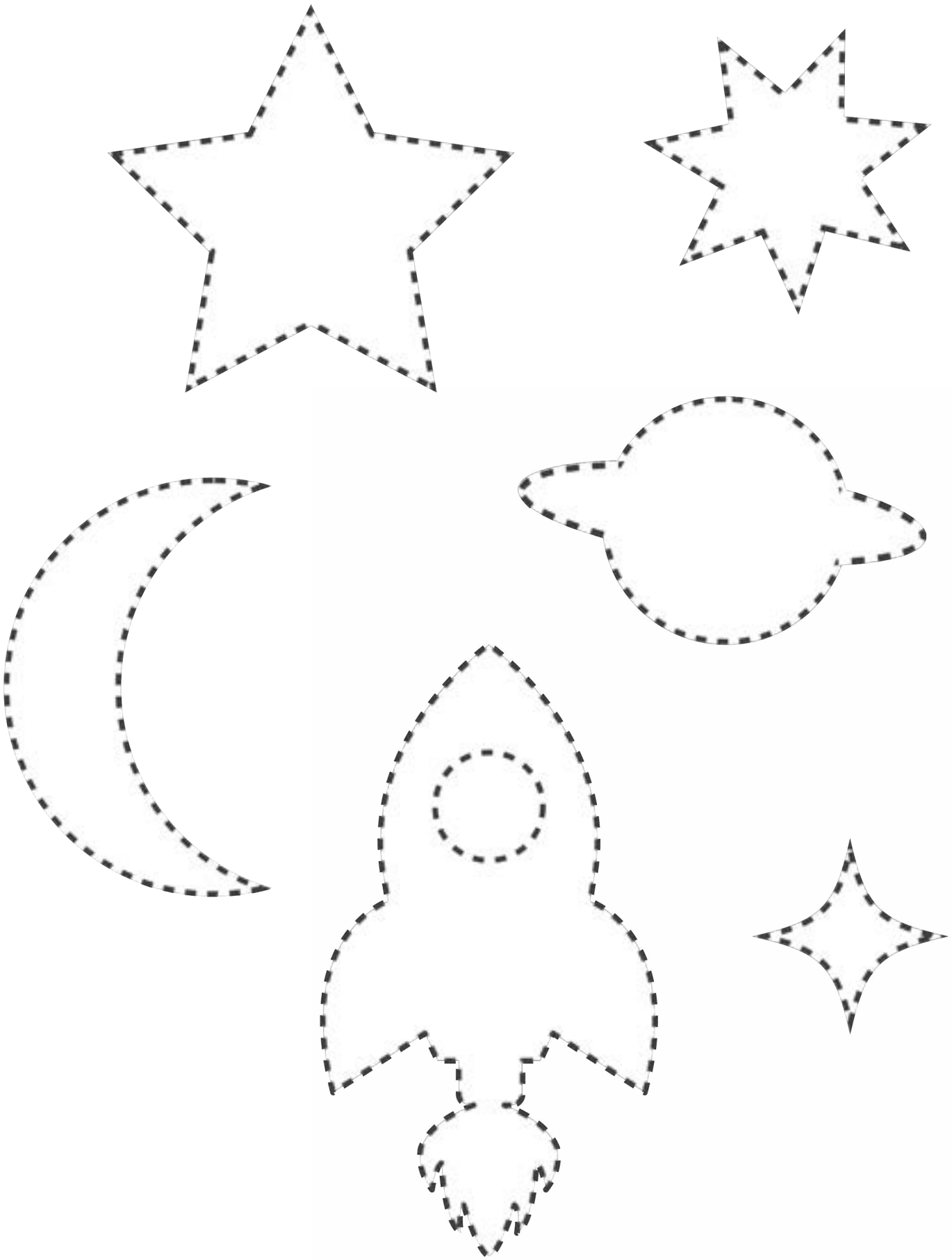
8. To finish your mobile, tie another piece of string to the stick, rod or coat hanger so that you can hang it up from above.

Options

- You can choose a different theme for your mobile. Stars and a moon are just one suggestion. If you
- can't find a suitable stick or rod, you can tape a few wooden skewers together.

Printable stencils on next page →

Cut out the shapes below to use as stencils for your stars and moon mobile.



Woven placemat

Materials

- Cardboard from a cereal box or similar (or re-use unwanted pieces of cardboard). Tip: the bigger the piece of cardboard, the bigger your placemat can be.
- Paint.
- Scissors and glue.

Instructions

STAGE 1: Painting the cardboard

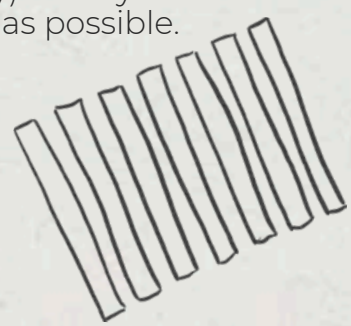
1.Cut open the cereal box, flatten it and cut it in half.

2. Paint the two halves of cardboard in different colours. If you use one colour per half, you will end up with a placemat of two different colours. If you use many colours in each half, you will end up with a mixture of colours on the placemat.

3. Leave the cardboard to dry.

STAGE 2: Cutting strips and weaving

4. Cut each piece of cardboard into long strips. The width of the strips is up to you (2 cm strips work out nicely) but try to make the strips as even as possible.



5. Lay all the strips from one half of the cardboard down in neat rows on the table, just touching each other, 'right' side facing up.

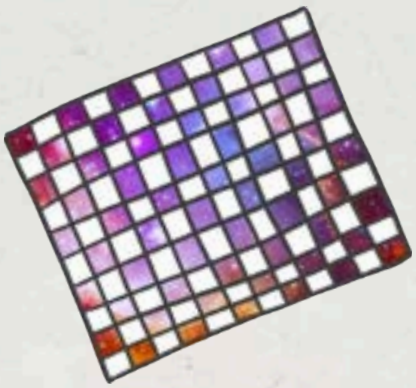
6. Take a strip from the second half and weave it through the other strips: under, over, under, over etc. with the 'right' side facing up.

7. Continue with the remaining strips. Tighten the weave by pressing the strips into place so that there are no big gaps or holes in the placemat. You should now have a square or rectangle of woven strips.

8. Trim any irregular edges and glue the ends of the strips in place.

Extra Idea

Instead of painting the strips, you could use any plain coloured cardboard and an interesting picture from a magazine like this:



Plastic bag skipping rope

Materials

- Collection of plastic bags and/or clean soft plastics.
- Scissors.
- Elastic bands.
- Duct tape or any strong tape.

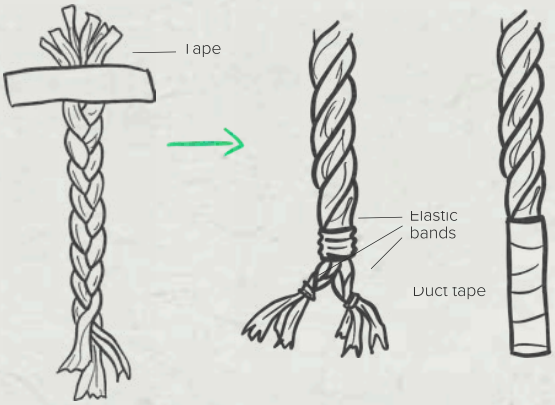
Instructions

1. Cut the handles off of all your plastic bags, then cut the bags open so that they form one large flat piece of plastic.

2. Cut all of your plastic bags into strips, about 2cm width. It doesn't matter if they aren't perfectly even, or even if the lengths are a bit different.

3. Tie your strips together until they reach the length that you want your stripping rope to be. Make a total of 12 long strips of the same length.

4. Take 6 of the strips and tape them to the back of a table/chair to anchor them. Then plait the strips together into one very long skipping-rope sized braid. Secure the ends with elastic bands. Repeat this step with the remaining strips.



5. Twist your 2 braids together tightly, then use duct tape or any strong tape to wrap around the loose ends and create a handle.

6. Go play with your new skipping rope!

Recycled mosaic

About

A mosaic is a picture or pattern made by assembling many small individual pieces into one large design. Traditionally, mosaics were made by setting tiles of glass, pieces of pottery or stones into plaster or cement. Because this is a recycled mosaic project, we'll make a mosaic out of old magazines or other materials destined for the recycling bin or garbage bin, such as brightly coloured lolly wrappers or shopping catalogues.

Materials

- Old magazines, catalogues, expired calendars, paper and cardboard scraps, fabric scraps, foil, lolly wrappers, etc.
- A piece of cardboard from which you can cut out a circle about 20-30 cm in diameter (a cereal box is fine).
- Glue and scissors.

MOSAIC IDEAS

- Your favourite animal
- Portrait of a friend or family member
- Landscape
- Outer space scene
- Your favourite animated character
- Flowers Still life (eg. bowl of fruit)
- Abstract art

Instructions

1. Use an upturned plate or a large compass to mark the outline of a circle. Make the circle as big or small as you want your mosaic to be. Cut out your circle.

2. Once you've decided on the design of your mosaic, use a pencil to draw the outline of your picture onto the cardboard circle.

3. Cut small squares or triangles out of your magazines or other materials. You might like to organise the pieces into piles of different colours, e.g. blues, reds, greens etc.

4. Assemble the coloured pieces onto the design you have drawn. Don't be afraid to play around with the arrangement of colours and shapes. You can be as neat or haphazard as you like. Once you're happy with the look, glue the pieces into position.

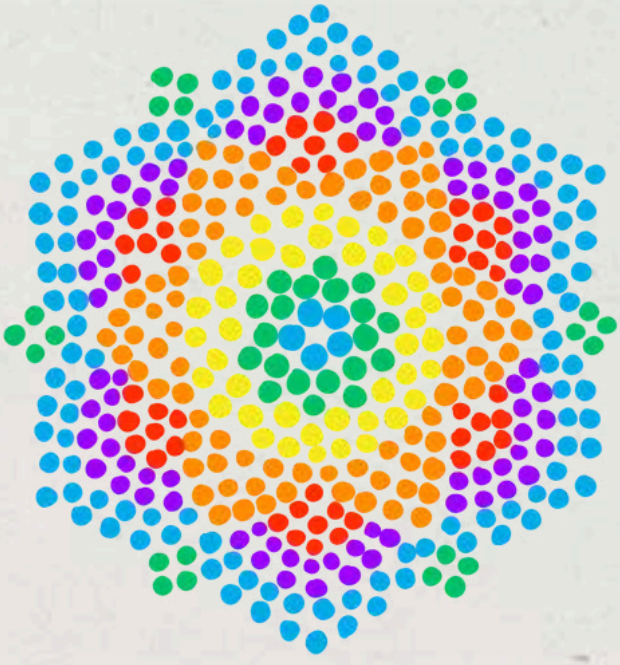
Bottle cap mandala

About

This is a project where the whole class works together to make one giant mandala made out of bottle caps and any other suitable 'waste' objects. The class may need to collect materials from home for a few weeks before the project can commence.

Materials

- As many bottle caps as the class can collect. Examples include the plastic caps that come on plastic bottles, some milk/juice cartons, aerosol cans and vitamin jars, jar lids and the steel caps that come on beer bottles and some glass soft drink bottles.
- Other small 'waste' or recyclable objects that you think are suitable, such as small yoghurt pot lids, small rigid pieces of plastic, etc.



Instructions

1. Choose a mandala design and print it out on a piece of paper so that the whole class can refer to it as a guide.

2. Sort the bottle caps and other objects into groups determined by their colour

3. On a clear area of the floor or ground, build your mandala by arranging the differently-coloured objects in accordance with the design. The size of your mandala will depend on how many objects the class was able to collect.

4. Ultimately, the mandala will be dismantled. You might want to take a photo of the mandala and the class before dismantling! Recycle as many of the objects as you can and dispose responsibly of the rest.

Extra Ideas

A mandala design is just one idea for your bottle caps. Here are some other options:

- Ocean scene, to highlight the plight of our sea creatures exposed to plastics.
- Bottle cap wind chimes using metal bottle tops hanging from an empty metal can.
- Name art for your room using bottle caps glued to a cardboard cutout of the first letter of your name.
- Bottle top Christmas tree using bottle caps glued onto a cone shape.
- Bottle top 'flowers' to use as garden decorations (glue bottle tops onto a flower shape attached to a stick).

Papier-mâché globe

About

This project needs to be done over several days, as each layer of papier-mâché needs to dry before another layer is added.

Materials

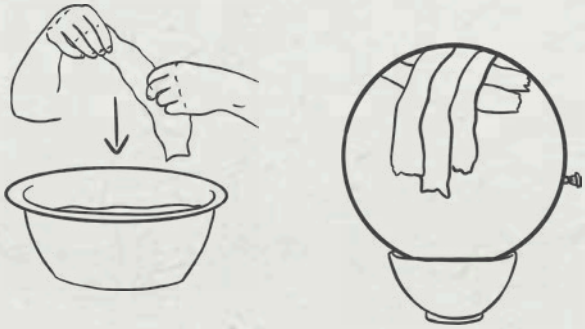
- Newspapers or other paper that would be destined for recycling.
- A papier-mâché paste in a bowl-like container. You can make this by mixing two parts white glue with one part water.
- Paint brushes.
- Paint.
- A round balloon.

Instructions

1. Blow up the balloon and tie the end. You might want to place the balloon on a bowl or a cup so that it stays in place without you holding it.

2. Tear the newspaper or paper into strips or patches that are no wider than 5cm. It's important to tear the paper rather than cut it, as torn edges will create a smoother papier-mâché layer.

3. Take a strip of paper and dip it into the papier-mâché paste. Run the strip between two fingers to remove excess paste so that you have a strip which is saturated but not dripping. Lay the wet strip onto the balloon.



4. Let the first layer dry completely. Add another two layers of papier-mâché, letting the second layer dry completely before adding the third.

5. Continue with more strips until the balloon is completely covered in a layer of paper and paste.

6. You're now ready to paint your globe. It will probably help to look at a 'real' globe or a map of the world. Use a pencil to sketch the outline of the continents onto your globe, then finish it with paint.

Recycled greeting cards

About

Receiving birthday cards, festive greeting cards and special occasion cards is great, but we don't always want to keep them all. Unwanted cards can be recycled with your normal paper recycling, or you can use them to make your own unique recycled greeting cards.

Materials

- Any old greeting cards you no longer wish to keep.
- Scissors and glue.
- A4 or A5 sheets of cardboard (A5 is half the size of an A4 page).
- OPTIONAL: assorted craft materials for extra decoration.

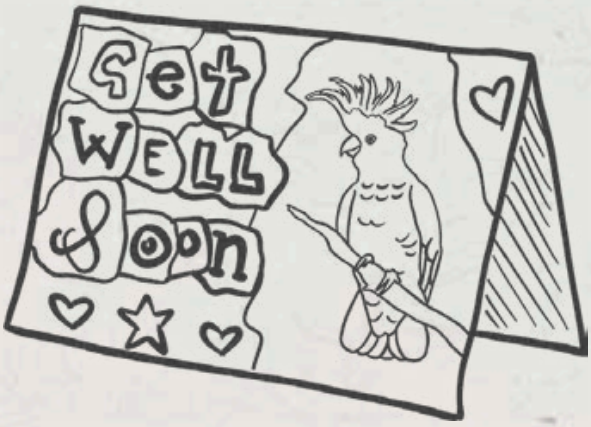
Instructions

1. If you have an A4 piece of cardboard, cut it in half so that you have two A5 pieces.

2. Fold each A5 piece in half to form a new card.

3. Using the old greeting cards, cut out any images, shapes, colours, letters or words that you might wish to use on your new cards.

4. Make your own unique cards by sticking on material from the old cards, as well as any other materials you may wish to use – ribbons, tinsel, crayons, colour pencils, etc.



‘Wastruments’

Shaker

Materials:

- Any clean container with a lid, e.g. jars, coffee tins or plastic bottles.
- Dry rice, beans or pasta.
- Paint and other craft materials for
- decoration.

Instructions:

1. Simply place a small amount of rice, beans or pasta inside the container and put the lid on securely.

2. Decorate the outside of the shaker however you wish. You could paint it, cut out pictures from a magazine and glue them to the container in a collage, put stickers on it, glue on ribbons or shapes cut from coloured scraps of paper, etc.

OPTIONS

If you can collect enough small, hard objects, you won’t need to use rice, beans or pasta inside the shaker. Examples are: plastic clips used to fasten a bread bag (cut each clip into quarters) or dry gumnuts that have fallen to the ground.

Drum

Materials: The beauty of drumming is that it can be done with many different objects. All you need is something that makes a nice sound when struck with your hand or a drumstick.

Suggested objects include:

- Cartons
- Tins or cans (turn them upside down if one end is open)
- Jars with plastic lids
- Plastic containers such as ice-cream containers, yoghurt pots or takeaway-style containers
- Sturdy plastic boxes
- Sturdy cardboard boxes
- Drumsticks can be improvised from objects such as a wooden spoon, spatula, pencil or stick

Instructions: Drum! Experiment with creating different sounds from the same objects.

‘Wastruments’

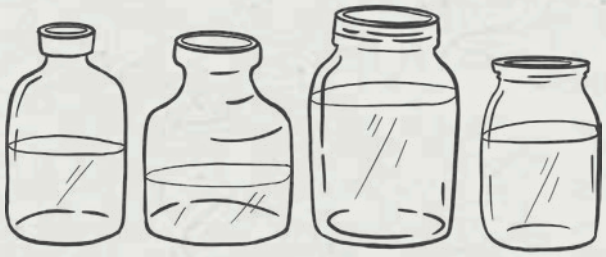
Scraper

Materials:

- A clean, empty steel can (make sure there are no sharp edges where the lid has been removed. For extra precaution, you can cut a circle of cardboard with a diameter a few centimetres larger than the diameter of the can, and use it to cover the open end of the tin, fastening it into place with sticky tape).
- A flat stick, pencil or ruler.

Instructions: The steel can scraper is one of the simplest musical instruments to make and play. You actually get two instruments in one, as it’s also a drum! Simply remove the label on the tin to expose the ridges on the sides, then run the stick up and down the tin to create a scraping noise (and/or hit the ends or the sides of the can to make a drumming sound).

Glass jar xylophone



Materials:

- Empty glass jars
- Water
- A wooden spoon, spatula, stick or pencil to use as a ‘mallet’

Instructions:

1. Fill the jars with varying amounts of water. The more water there is in a jar, the lower the pitch will be.

2. Arrange the jars in a line, perhaps in order rom the lowest pitch to the highest or in any arrangement that works for you.

3. To play your xylophone, gently strike the jars with your mallet.

4. Adjust the water levels in the jars if necessary to produce the range of sounds you want.

CLICK HERE TO SEE A GLASS JAR XYLOPHONE IN ACTION

‘Wastruments’

Plastic bottle pan pipe

Like the glass jar xylophone, the plastic bottle panpipe works by varying the amount of water in the bottles, however this time the sound is produced by blowing across the top of the bottles.

Materials:

- Empty plastic bottles (600ml size or smaller is best).
- Water.
- Sticky tape or other strong tape.

Instructions:

1. Fill the bottles with varying amounts of water. The more water there is in a jar, the lower the pitch will be.

2. Arrange the bottles in a line, perhaps in order from the lowest pitch to the highest or in any arrangement that works for you.

3. To play your panpipe, blow across the tops of the bottles.

4. Adjust the water levels in the bottles if necessary to produce the range of sounds you want.

5. You can line up the bottles on a table or you can tape the bottles securely together so that you can pick them up and raise the whole thing to your lips – just be careful not to tip the panpipes so much that you spill the water.

SHARE YOUR CREATIONS WITH US!

Share your creativity with us by tagging @planetark on social media and include the #nationalrecyclingweek hashtag.

When it's time to clean up

We hope you and your students get lots of joy and use out of your craft projects! When they reach the end of their time with you, here are a few tips to dispose of them properly.

- Take all pieces of your craft apart when you need to get rid of them so you can dispose of each material correctly.
- If you have stuck decorations like feather or jewels with hot glue to your craft and the decorations and glue cannot be removed, these items will have to go in your general waste bin.
- For cardboard and paper to remain recyclable, use pencils, textas or watercolour paints to decorate. If you've used oil-based paints, the item will have to be disposed of in the general waste bin.
- Remember, nothing smaller than the size of a credit card can go into kerbside recycling bins. If you have smaller pieces of card or carton, such as the stars in the mobile activity, these will need to be disposed of in the general waste bin.
- If you have filled containers for your 'Wastruments' with food, water, or found objects be sure to separate them before disposing of them. While the container may be recyclable, what's inside may not, so be sure to dispose of every piece correctly.

For more information on recycling in your area, visit
recyclingnearyou.com.au

30 YEARS

“The greatest threat to our planet is the belief that **someone else will save it.**

ROBERT SWAN
Explorer and conservationist

PLANET ARK

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