

Paper Making Extension Activity

Supplies

- Various papers for recycling
- Lint
- Bleach, optional addition to pulp
- Liquid starch, optional addition to pulp
- Paper making screen frames
- (commercial or made from window screen mesh stapled to old picture frames)
- Plants
- Twigs
- Flowers
- Thread
- Glitter
- Pigment
- Shallow buckets
- Deep bucket
- Sponges
- Felt or absorbent cloths
- Press or bricks

Preparation

Research the method of papermaking that best suits your situation. There are several recipes and ideas for papermaking on the Web. Use your browser to search “paper making recipes” or “how to make paper.” Practice a couple of methods before teaching to ensure what will work best for your students.

Collect paper and supplies. Consider using the collection of paper you or your students gathered for analysis in your pre-visit activity, recycled “Exploring Paper at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheets from your TCA visit and/or students’ paper strip sculptures after they have completed their drawings in the post-visit activity.

There are several ways to create your paper making frames. One of the best ways is to purchase screen mesh from the hardware store and attach the mesh to old wooden picture frames to create paper making frames.

Process

Fill shallow buckets with water about four inches deep. Buckets have to be large enough for the frame to be fully immersed. Set up a paper making area in your classroom for easy access of materials such as pulp, glitter, thread, plants, etc. Have sponges and absorbent cloth ready.

Put pulp in large shallow bucket, immerse screen and gather pulp on top of screen. It is important to get the pulp plump and full of water. One mistake students make is they use too much pulp resulting in paper that is too thick. Hydrating the pulp makes it fuller and prevents students from using too much pulp.

After the pulp is on the screen, add the other materials you want to use in your paper. Mix materials in with the pulp. Press the excess water out of the pulp. Make sure the frame is over the bucket when expressing the excess water. Use sponges to assist in removing water.

After the students finish creating their paper, take the frame over to a table and, using an absorbent cloth, press down and remove more water. Flip the frame upside down on the absorbent cloth. Take another sheet of absorbent cloth and place it on the back side of the paper. Students may need to use a few pieces of absorbent cloth. Place the paper in a press or place heavy objects, such as bricks, on top of the paper and cloths to keep the stack flat until dry.

Robert Arneson is a good example of a modern artist who used paper as an art medium. The Arizona State University Art Museum exhibits a large Arneson paper sculpture, *Flat Face*, in its Americas Gallery.