

The background of the cover is a child's drawing. It depicts a winter scene with a snowman in the center, made of three white circles. The snowman has two small black dots for eyes and a curved line for a mouth. It is wearing a blue scarf. To the left of the snowman is a green, textured tree. To the right is another green, textured tree. The ground is white with some blue and green marks. The sky is blue with white clouds. The drawing is done with crayons or markers, showing a lot of texture and color.

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# SKUTT

# CONTENTS

VOLUME 150, No. 4

DECEMBER 2011

## THE SEASON FOR TEXTURE

- 12** COOL POLAR BEARS: DABBING ON THE TEXTURE *Jean O'Connell*
- 14** TEXTURE & TEXTILES, TOGETHER *Paula Guhin*
- 16** TAPPING ANCIENT ROOTS: PLAITED PAPER BASKETS *Jane Patrick*
- 24** ABSTRACT LINE DESIGNS *Nancy Nevinskas*
- 26** WINTER BIRCH TREES *Debra Sweeney and Judy Rounds*
- 31** CHILDREN'S ART DIARY: TEXTURE RUBBINGS *George Székely*

## SPECIAL FEATURES AND COLUMNS

- 10** STEPPING STONES: ... 5 TIPS ON HOW TO COPE WITH BUDGET CUTS  
*Jessica Balsley*
- 11** ART TEACHERS I HAVE KNOWN: RUDOLF ARNHEIM *Jerome J. Hausman*
- 23** SAILING THE SEVEN C'S TO BETTER PAINTING: ASSIGNMENT 4 IN A SERIES  
OF 10, CONFIDENCE *Dan Bartges*
- 25** YOUNG ARTIST: RENEE LAVENTURE *Lisa Blanchette*
- 28** ARTIST TRADING CARDS: CONNECTING WITH OTHER COMMUNITIES  
*Deborah Bovio*
- 38** TRIED & TRUE TIPS FOR ART TEACHERS: WEAVING AND TEXTURE  
*Glenda Lubiner*

## CLIP & SAVE PRINT: MOVEMENT IN ART

- 19** CLASSROOM USE OF THE ART PRINT *Colleen Carroll*
- 20** ART PRINT: EL JALEO *John Singer Sargent*
- 22** CLIP & SAVE ART NOTES *Colleen Carroll*

## A&A AT YOUR SERVICE

- 32** CLAY CORNER
- 34** WINTER CATALOG SHOWCASE
- 37** READER SERVICE/AD INDEX

## DEPARTMENTS

- 4** EDITOR'S NOTE
- 6** MEDIA REVIEWS
- 8** SHOP TALK

## ON THE COVER

COOL POLAR BEARS (detail) *Tempera and crayon on construction paper, 9" x 12".*  
By a student at Fairfield West Elementary School, Fairfield, Ohio.  
See "Cool Polar Bears: Dabbing on the Texture," page 12.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** (858) 605-0251; subs@artsandactivities.com. **AD SALES:** (800) 826-2216; ads@artsandactivities.com.  
**AD PRODUCTION:** production@artsandactivities.com. **EDITORIAL:** (858) 605-0242; ed@artsandactivities.com. **FAX:** (858) 605-0247. **WEBSITE:** www.artsandactivities.com. **ADDRESS:** 12345 World Trade Dr., San Diego, CA 92128.

*Arts & Activities*® (ISSN 0004-3931) is published monthly, except July and August, by Publishers' Development Corp., 12345 World Trade Dr., San Diego, CA 92128. Subscriptions: one year, \$24.95; two years, \$39.95; three years, \$49.95. Foreign subscriptions, add \$20 per year for postage. Single copy, \$4. Title to this magazine passes to subscriber only on delivery to his or her address. Change of address requires at least four weeks' notice. Send old address and new address. Periodical postage paid at San Diego, Calif., and at additional mailing offices. Printing by Democrat Printing, Little Rock, Ark.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to: *Arts & Activities*®, 12345 World Trade Drive, San Diego, CA 92128.



16



24



28



*Winter's the season for texture. It's nice to be cloaked in something warm and fuzzy when it's cold outside. In "Cool Polar Bears: Dabbing on the Texture" (page 12), Jean O'Connell tells us, "Winter in Ohio was the perfect time for my second-graders to create their cool polar bears!" In this lesson, students use the elements of shape and texture to create their bears, applying Monet's technique of dabbing paint to show the texture of fur.*

*Paula Guhin suggests high-schoolers can use "Texture & Textiles, Together" (page 14) to create intriguing tactile art. Writes Paula, "Creating a painting with texture is easy, although using heavy gel medium or modeling paste may be pricey ways to go about it. High school artists generally like making collages and mixed-media, so why not capitalize on that interest with inexpensive fabric in a painting project?"*

*In "Tapping Ancient Roots: Plaited Paper Baskets" (page 16), Jane Patrick shares her weaving experience. "This simple basket—an appropriate project for middle and high-school students—holds lessons in art, in reusing materials to create something new, as well as providing a practical lesson in the study of the art and craft of Native American or other ancient cultures," writes Jane. "It is a powerful message that, even today, baskets are a product of the hands."*

*Nancy Nevinskas' "Abstract Line Designs" includes two lessons (page 24). In the first, elementary students learn about line as an element of design, describe line types, and identify them in reproductions. They draw various lines from one side of 10" x 12" paper to the opposite. The spaces between lines are colored in with crayons or simply left white. As they work, it dawns on students they are creating abstract works of art! The designs are then glued onto 12" x 14" construction paper, creating a border in which they write descriptions of their lines.*

*Painting and stitching are involved in the second lesson, with the same basic directions: paint a variety of lines that go from one edge of the burlap to the opposite. When the painted lines were dry—and basic hand-sewing skills reviewed and demonstrated—students stitched around or on top of their lines, enhancing their abstract works of art.*

*The ideas shared this month will help heat up your students' creativity. When it's cold outside, it's nice to be cloaked in something warm and fuzzy. And, that's why winter is the season for texture!*



*Maryellen*

Maryellen Bridge, Editor and Publisher  
ed@artsandactivities.com

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advertising manager **Tracy Brdicko**  
tracy@artsandactivities.com  
800.826.2216 or  
888.651.7567  
production director **Linda Peterson**  
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**Indexes/Microfilm** Articles are indexed in January and June issues. Issues of *Arts & Activities* are available on microfilm and photocopies from: ProQuest Information and Learning, P.O. Box 1346, 300 N. Zeeb Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48106. (Issues beginning with January 1977 are available in microfiche.) The full text of *Arts & Activities* is also available in the electronic versions of the Education Index.

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**CAPTURING NATURE'S BEAUTY: Three Centuries of French Landscapes** (2009; \$19.95), by Edouard Kopp. Getty Publications.

Paul Cézanne is quoted at the beginning of the foreword of this book: "Today our sight is a little weary, burdened by the memory of a thousand images ... We no longer see nature, we see pictures over and over again." How true! This is even more the case in our contemporary society with mass-produced images even more a part of our lives.

All of this makes this small publication so very important in the teaching of art. As the author notes: "French artists have drawn landscapes, which can be defined as coherent representations of the physical world, since the late Middle Ages."

This book highlights important

examples of the French landscape tradition from the 1600s to the 1800s. Examples by such artists as Francois Boucher, Vincent van Gogh, Claude Lorrain, Camille Pissarro, Theodore Rousseau and Georges Seurat are included.

All works are now in the J. Paul Getty Museum; the author, Edouard Kopp, is the Assistant Curator of Drawings at that museum. Each of the works included in the book are accompanied by brief descriptive essays.

Advanced high-school students can come to understand and appreciate the differences and similarities in style and technique. For example, we can come to grasp the subtle poetical visions of Claude Lorrain, who is considered by many to be the greatest French artist to specialize in landscape painting.

Also, we can see the connections

between Lorrain and his friend Nicolas Poussin. How different these works are when compared to the dark and dramatic qualities of the Eugene Delacroix pastel on paper.

Overall, this is a book that demonstrates the range of possibilities in the rendering of landscapes.—J.J.H.

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**CREATING FIBER WEAVINGS AND BASKETS.** DVD/VHS/31 min./\$29.95. Crystal Productions.

The fiber arts are not always given the attention they deserve in school art programs. They have wonderful cultural connections that are outstanding for exercising and developing fine motor coordination and, more often than not, result in very pleasing finished projects.

In this presentation, Peggy Flores focuses on three basic weaving techniques: circle weaving, flat weaving and basket weaving. She does a wonderful job of presenting the various techniques in an easy-to-follow manner that could serve as either a demonstration for students or instruction for teachers. Flores also does a very good job of including valuable tips to make the various techniques easier to master.

The fiber weaving supplies used in this presentation include wool, cotton and synthetic materials. Fiber weaving materials are not inexpensive. Once purchased in bulk, however, they go a long way, and many items—like cardboard looms and plastic needles—can be used over and over again.

Having included weaving projects similar to those seen in this video as part of my third- and fourth-grade art class curriculum for many years, I found this presentation to be perfectly in keeping with the approaches I use.

Having said that, and as Elliot Eisner states, there are different ways to solve the same problems; consequently, I learned several new bits of information while watching the video.—P.H.

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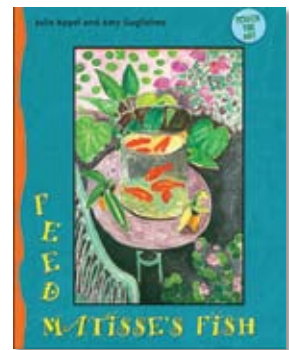
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Stepping Stones is a monthly column that breaks down seemingly daunting tasks in art education into simple, manageable “steps” that any art educator can take and apply directly to their classroom. Stepping Stones will explore a variety of hot topics and research in the field today.

# 5 Tips On How to Cope with Budget Cuts

by Jessica Balsley

**A**rt educators, by nature, are very creative people! Our right brains just can't help themselves when it comes to generating new and innovative ideas for the art room.

With budget cuts and hard times for schools becoming the norm, art educators must also become creative when it comes to finding money in their budget. These five tips will help you cope with budget cuts by maximizing what you have, and will give you ideas about resources around your community that can supplement your art budget.

**1 ASK OTHER TEACHERS** At the end of each school year, I ask other teachers if they have supplies they do not need, or that will be replaced the following year. Often, I obtain a large supply of half-used glue bottles, barely used crayons and markers that have been used only a handful of times! Because school supply lists will replace these items in the fall, the teachers don't know what to do with the surplus. By having these basic items on hand, I can spend my budget on other, more specialized supplies.

**2 CREATE AN ART ROOM WISH LIST** An “Art Room Wish List” is a great way to obtain supplies you are in need of. Post your Art Room Wish List in a parent newsletter or attach it to the door of the art room. You will be amazed at how many parents want to help out. The items do not need to be fancy. Things such as paper plates, craft sticks, old yogurt containers (for paint) and more are easy to obtain. And all of those “extras” add up over time!

**3 HOLD A FUND-RAISER** This seems like an obvious tip. However, many of us don't know where to even start when it comes to fund-raising. There are many programs and companies out there that can help you fund-raise by putting artwork on apparel for students to purchase. Alternately, there are online programs that allow parents to view and purchase art with proceeds going to the school. If you have never explored these avenues, it's worth a try.

**4 ASK YOUR PTO OR PTA** Most schools have some sort of organization run by parents to support the school. Oftentimes, these groups are just waiting to spend money to help the school, but don't know exactly what the school

needs until someone asks. My art room was in major need of a few new things, like a new faucet, countertop and storage bins, and the school refused to help. So, I went to the PTO. They thought it was a fabulous place to put some money, because all students utilize and benefit from the art room. I really didn't think asking them would work, but they were happy to help. Who knew?

**5 MAKE SMALLER ART PROJECTS** One way to save money and cut down on the amount of paper, paint and supplies being used is to make all of your art projects smaller. Instead of giving students a full sheet of that expensive watercolor paper, give them a half sheet. This will make your supply go twice as far, and the students

*Oftentimes, these groups are just waiting to spend money to help the school, but don't know exactly what the school needs until someone asks.*

probably won't miss a thing. Another positive aspect to this method? Less surface area means less paint or crayon used. If you are accustomed to doing large pieces of art, but are on a budget, rethink sizes—and see your supplies double right before your eyes!

*It can be easy to get down, complain and make excuses when faced with budget cuts in the arts. Instead, let's empower ourselves and find creative and innovative ways to work with what we have, as well as continue to advocate for our programs. One teacher's positive attitude and quality instruction will impact student learning far more than an expensive oil pastel. Hopefully, some of these tips will work for you when faced—like many of us are—with a budget that is dwindling.* ■

Jessica Balsley is a K–5 art educator and the founder of [www.theartofed.com](http://www.theartofed.com), which offers a wide range of services designed just for art teachers.



## ART TEACHERS I HAVE KNOWN

by Jerome J. Hausman

In general, history is made up of accounts and analyses that help us understand who we are and how we have come to where we are. Oftentimes, we speak of “the history of art educators,” but there’s no simple narrative that tells the full story. These are histories. When you come down to it, our history is made up of accounts of people and institutions—their actions and ideas. As the years go by, I frequently pause to think about individuals who’ve influenced me. These thoughts and memories serve as the basis for this series, “Art Teachers I Have Known.”—J.J.H.

It was in 1948 while studying at New York University that I first heard of Rudolf Arnheim. He was a professor in the department of psychology at Sarah Lawrence College.

Like many teaching in colleges in or around New York City, he took on an added assignment: teaching a course at the New School for Social Research in Manhattan. (Later, he became a member of their graduate faculty.) A friend enrolled in Arnheim’s class told me of this “wonderful lecturer.” Whenever I could do so, I attended his lectures. Truly, he opened new vistas for me and my thinking about *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the*

are, at once, focused and informed.

Writing in the foreword of *New Essays on the Psychology of Art*, he stated: “*A discipline grows like a tree, one on which the nature and function of every new twig is determined by its place in the whole.*”

He saw things in ways that “connected the dots.” He had a sense for evolving structures as we learn to make sense in our experience. As he put it: “*Perception turns out to be not a mechanical recording of the stimuli imposed by the physical world upon the receptor organs of man and animal, but the eminently active and creative grasping of structure.*”

# Rudolf Arnheim

*Creative Eye*—the title of the book he later published in 1954 with the University of California Press.

Rudolf Arnheim received his doctoral degree in 1928 from the University of Berlin, with major studies in the psychology of visual expression, philosophy and the history of art and music. His principal teachers were the Gestalt psychologists Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Kohler and Kurt Lewin.

His early books, *Film as Art* and *Radio: An Art of Sound*, gained widespread recognition in areas of art criticism, aesthetics and art education. Along with Sir Herbert Read and Viktor Lowenfeld, his thinking helped transform my views of art education.

What is so powerful and convincing in Arnheim’s writing is the ability to bring together his knowledge of history, philosophy and psychology. His claims

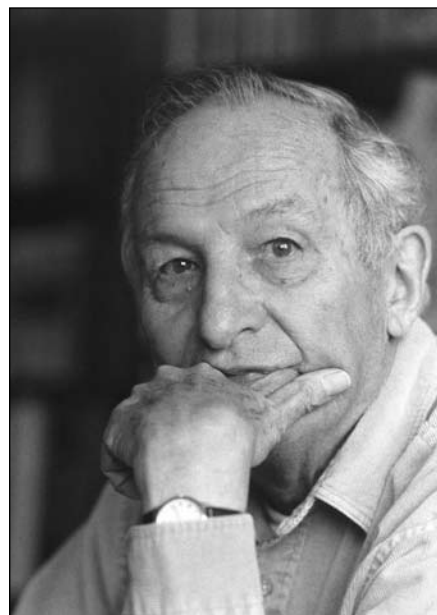
His accomplishments are too numerous to detail in this space. His books include: *Art and Visual Perception: A Psychology of the Creative Eye*; *Entropy and Art: An Essay on Disorder and Order*; *The Genesis of a Painting: Picasso’s Guernica*; *The Power of the Center: A Study of Composition in the Visual Arts*; *Toward a Psychology of Art: Collected Essays*; *Visual Thinking*; and others.

Throughout his work there is a basic premise: “*Artistic activity is a form of reasoning, in which perceiving and thinking are indivisibly intertwined.*” (Preface, *Visual Thinking*.)

Rudolf Arnheim was a frequent lecturer at art education conferences and seminars. From 1968 until his retirement, he taught at Harvard University’s Carpenter Center for the Visual Arts, and thereafter at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor.

I can recall many informal conversations with him. He was passionate about his love for the arts and was always the consummate teacher: willing to listen to students, and able to address their questions and concerns.

For me, more personally, I was privileged to review his book, *Parables of Sun Light: Observations on Psychology, the Arts and the Rest* (1989). What a thrill to receive a note of acknowledgment and thanks from Rudi. He was always a scholar and gentleman.



Rudolf Arnheim. Photo courtesy of NAEA.

My friend, Howard Gardner, put it so well: “*Rudi’s work and his life are a harmonious piece. He is an artist and a craftsman in life, as well as in his writings. He is interested in the qualities of experience—of art, of science, of the imagination—and he savors such experiences for himself and re-creates them for others in words and pictures and images.*” ■

Jerome J. Hausman is a visiting professor at The School of The Art Institute of Chicago and serves on the Arts & Activities Editorial Advisory Board.



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

#### Elementary students will ...

- use the elements of shape and texture to create the bears.
- use Monet's technique of dabbing paint to show the texture of fur.
- create an artwork based on familiar objects in the environment.
- demonstrate flexibility in their design, in representational drawing and in the use of art materials.
- connect their art with other disciplines.

### MATERIALS

- 9" x 12" light blue construction paper
- White tempera and thick paintbrushes
- 3" x 3" white paper for snowflakes
- Crayons, glue and scissors
- *Polar Bears* by Jason and Jody Stone. Blackbirch Press; 2000.

# COOL POLAR BEARS: Dabbing on the Texture

by Jean O'Connell



**W**inter in Ohio was the perfect time for my second-graders to create their cool polar bears!

After reading *Polar Bears*, by Jason and Jody Stone (Blackbirch Press; 2000), we talked about the characteristics of polar bears. We discovered some interesting facts, such as polar bears are really black under all that white fur!

We looked at several photographs of polar bears, some from calendars and others from books. The students talked

**After making basic shapes with white tempera paint, students used crayon to add dimension and detail.**

about what they had seen polar bears doing at zoos, and we discussed other places we had seen the bears, such as the Coke® commercials that air around the holidays.

We became excited about painting some bears of our own. The students could paint one bear or a whole crowd.

First, I demonstrated how to use shapes to make just the head and shoulders of a bear. We used Monet's technique of dabbing paint so as to give the bear some texture on his fur. We used white tempera to paint a large white triangle in the center of a sheet of 9" x 12" blue construction paper.

Then, we painted smaller circles for the ears. We painted the shoulders attached to the bear, and dabbed on some large paws. We also added a few dabbed snowflakes in the air around the bear.

I gave a second demonstration on painting the whole body of bears. I painted some snow on which the bears could walk. Then I painted an oval for the body, a small triangle for the head, little round ears and long, thin rectangles for the legs. The same shapes were used to paint some baby bears.

After the students finished painting the basic bear shapes without small details, they began cutting small snowflakes to add to the background of their picture. During the next class period, we used black crayon to add a nose, claws and eyes. The nose was shaded a little to add some dimension. Some students gave their bears scarves and hats of various colors, and others chose to have their bears look more realistic.

The students enjoyed working on their bears, and learned about endangered animals and the arctic climate along the way. ■

*Jean O'Connell is a visual art specialist at Fairfield West Elementary in Ohio.*





# Texture & Textiles,

by Paula Guhin

**C**reating a painting with texture is easy, although using heavy gel medium or modeling paste may be pricey ways to go about it. High school artists generally like making collages and mixed-media, so why not capitalize on that interest with inexpensive fabric in a painting project?

**YOU CAN FEEL THE FABRIC** Muslin is cheap and is easily adhered

(in a number of ways) to plywood, masonite or canvas boards. Ask your students to gesso both sides of the substrate and let it dry. Substitute any fabric scraps for muslin if you wish. Break out your box of lace, crochet, gauze and more!

Show the class an example or sampler that you made ahead of time, with the material folded, bunched or draped and adhered to a background. It can

be attached to the surface with white craft glue or liquid acrylic medium.

Ask the class members to consider how they'll use dimensional cloth elements in their own paintings. Do they want ragged edges, holes in the material and threads trailing off? Or do they want to cut or fold the fabric into hard-edged shapes? If students make sketches first, the cloth can be arranged and glued down accordingly.



The texture of the fabric will show more if it has a looser weave. ▲

Here the fabric was gathered and pillowed to create a protruding form. >

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### High school students will ...

- understand the definitions of form, texture, tactile and dimension.
- use imagination and creativity to develop a painting with textiles as an important component.
- choose and/or adjust suitable subject-matter appropriate to the assignment.
- exhibit good craftsmanship and proper handling of tools and materials.

## MATERIALS

- Burlap, muslin, cotton or other fabrics
- Substrate of choice
- White craft glue or liquid acrylic medium
- Containers
- Paintbrushes, palettes and palette knives (optional)
- Oil or acrylic paints and their mediums
- Rags or paper towels
- Scissors
- Gesso (optional)





# Together

After that's dry, paint as desired.

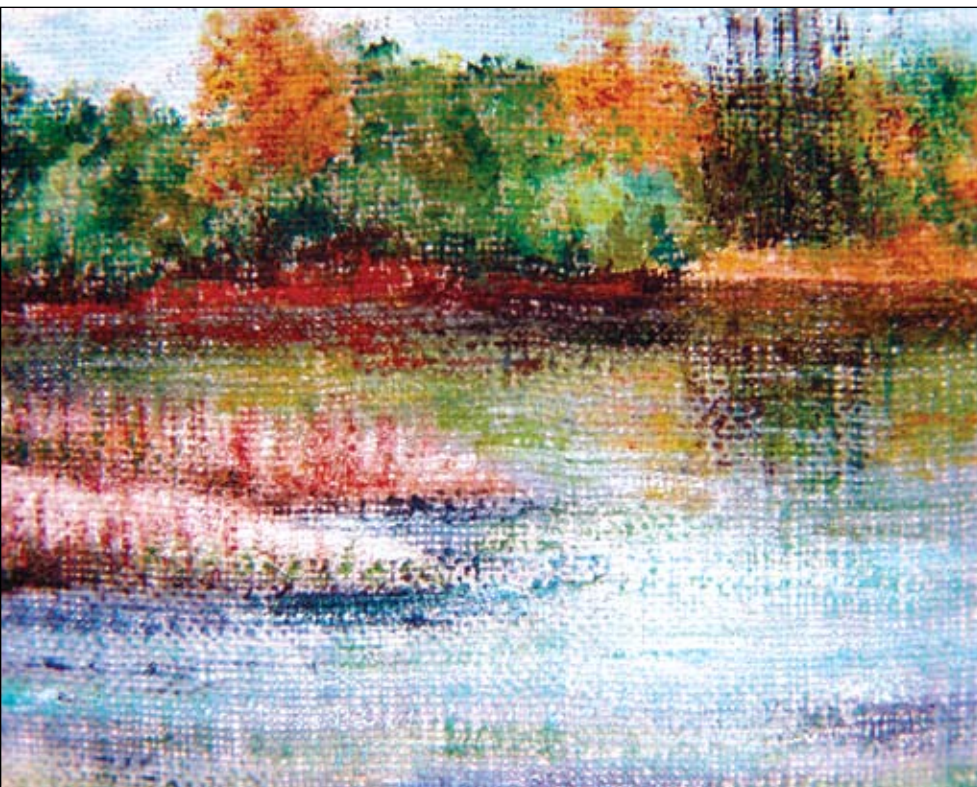
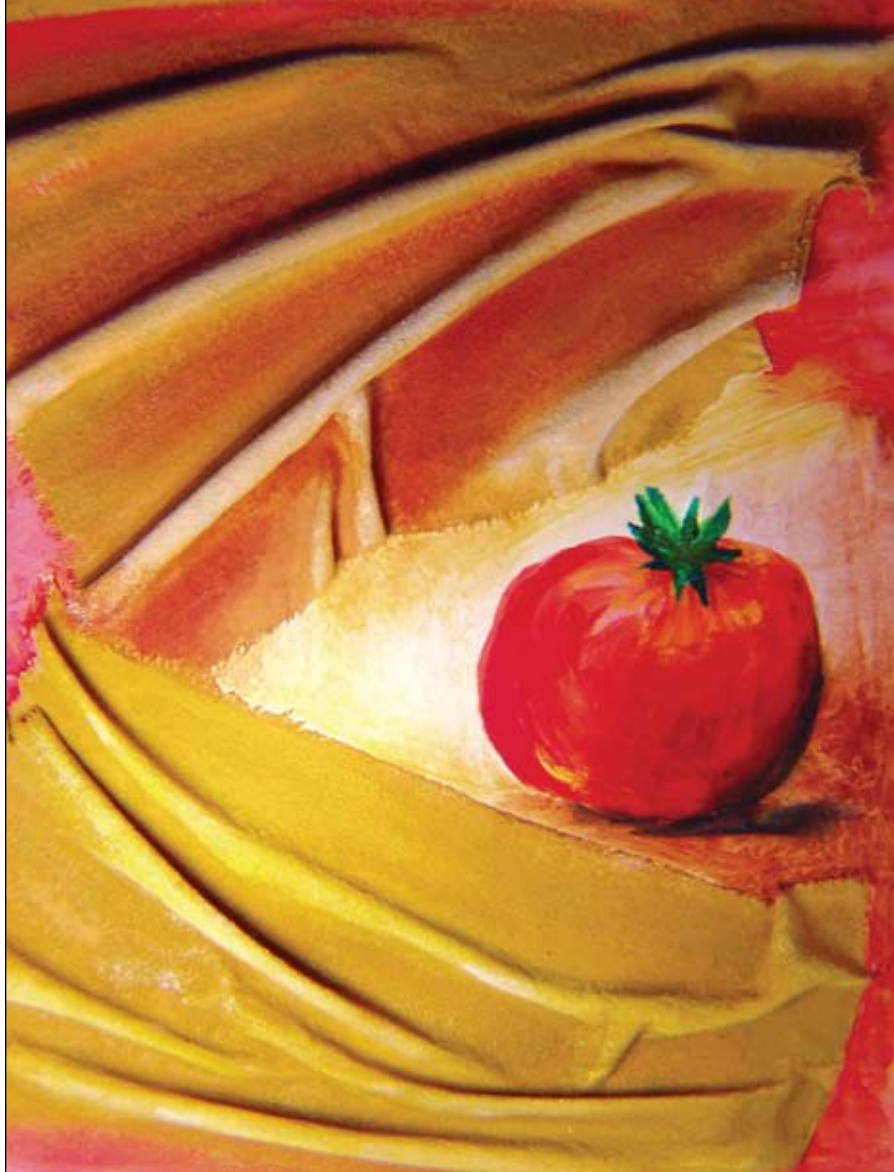
**A TACTILE TEXTILE** Here's another way to incorporate cloth into a painting: The coarse texture of burlap makes it a fun fabric to paint on, and it's fairly inexpensive. There are many burlap weaves and colors available, and most of them have a very irregular grain. Young artists can even pull some of the threads or stretch the burlap in interesting ways before they attach it to a board or canvas panel with glue.

Once the burlap is thoroughly dry on the substrate, you can ask the students to gesso it if you wish. An economical primer is white or light-colored latex house paint (dilute it with water a bit to extend it if it's thick).

After the gesso is dry, paint with

**Folds in the background and foreground add dimensional cloth elements to a painting.** >

**Painting or drawing with pastels on burlap lends the appearance of tapestry to an artwork.** v



your worst, ratty old brushes, since the rough texture is hard on the bristles. Palette knives are another option.

For subject matter when painting on burlap, you might suggest Impressionistic landscapes, loose figures or daubed-on florals. Caution the kids that the coarse, uneven surface does not contribute toward fine detail.

Burlap seems to soak up lots of paint, so use student-grade paints. If you're using acrylics, you could ask the students to mix a little water (or fluid acrylic medium) with them to make them go further.

High school artists will “feel” the fun with these textural or dimensional fabric techniques. ■

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*Paula Guhin is the author of several art books and serves as a Contributing Editor for Arts & Activities. She is retired from teaching and now blogs at [MixedMediaManic.blogspot.com](http://MixedMediaManic.blogspot.com).*



## TAPPING ANCIENT ROOTS

# Plaited Paper Baskets

by Jane Patrick

**A**lmost any basket you'll see anywhere has been woven by hand—an amazing fact given our mechanized world. With few exceptions, baskets are three-dimensional woven forms in a variety of techniques and materials.

With ancient roots, basket making has been practiced since the earliest civilizations, and according to textile experts, probably pre-dates pottery. This is partly conjecture since few baskets remain. It is through evidence found in clay impressions that the earliest baskets reveal themselves. Take a field trip to a natural history or art museum to view the baskets on display. Your students will be rewarded with a view of our predecessor's ingenuity and craftsmanship.

Basically, basketry construction is like flat weaving. A base is woven flat with elements called stakes or weavers. These are then “upstaked,” or bent, to weave the sides. For this basket, the weavers used to make the base are crossed for the sides in what is referred to as “bias plaiting.”

**Color play.** It is fun to

see what happens when colors are woven together.

For this small basket I used half-inch weavers made from colored craft

paper. I alternated red and gold in

both directions for striped patterns. Creasing gives this basket straight sides.



This simple basket—an appropriate project for middle- and high-school students—holds lessons in art, in reusing materials to create something new, as well as providing a practical lesson in the study of the art and crafts of Native American and ancient cultures. It is a powerful message that, even today, baskets are a product of the hands. ■

Jane Patrick is the author of “Time to Weave” and “The Weaver’s Idea Book,” and the Creative Director for loom maker Schacht Spindle Company in Boulder, Colo.



**Garden basket.** This small organic basket is woven with iris leaves from the garden. I cut them close to the ground in the fall and laid them flat to dry. Just before weaving, I soaked them in the bathtub with warm water, adding a couple of teaspoons of glycerin to soften them. I rolled them in a towel for a couple of hours to further condition them. To keep them moist during weaving, I sprayed them with water. The edge is made by simply folding down the weavers and trimming. I shaped the top by folding out the points as the basket dried.



**Read all about it.** *The Sunday funny papers are a colorful choice for basket weaving (left). To stiffen and protect the basket, I painted it inside and out with white glue. A monochromatic alternative is a basket woven from pages where I deliberately avoided colorful photos and looked for small print, such as want ads (right). After weaving, I treated the surface with melted beeswax for a muted and aged appearance.*



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Middle- and high-school students will ...**

- reuse materials to create something new.
- experience a practical lesson in the study of the art and crafts of Native American or ancient cultures.

## NATIONAL STANDARD

- Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.



**Paper explorations.** *For this off-white basket, I used thick-textured handmade paper with botanicals, which I folded in half for weaving.*



**The step-by-step procedure for weaving a plaited paper basket is found on the next page.** ➡



Go to [artsandactivities.com](http://artsandactivities.com) and click on this button for a list of resources related to this article.



## MATERIALS

- Large, brown paper bags
- String and/or thread
- Clothespins
- Scissors and tweezers
- Awl or long screw driver

## PLAITED PAPER BASKETS

*For this weaving project, grocery bags are used in a technique called "bias plaiting," a technique that works much like braiding, where elements weave across each other. Here, the base is woven and then the elements, or "weavers," cross each other to form the sides. The pattern is always over, under, over, under.*

## WEAVING PROCEDURE

**1.** Prepare the strips by carefully cutting out the bottom of a grocery bag. With the bag folded, measure 3.5-inch-wide strips across the width of the bag. Draw cutting lines horizontally and carefully cut them, creating 16 rings. Cut each ring apart at one seam; each strip should be about 38 inches long. The straighter the strips, the better the basket will be. To create sturdy weavers, fold each strip in half lengthwise, printed side in. Fold the edges to the center, and finally, fold these edges together, creasing tightly.



**2.** Weave a square base in plain weave (over, under, over, under), using eight weavers in both directions. If folds of the strips point toward the center of each side, the corners of the basket will be crisper.



**3.** Mark the base by twinning around the edges. This is only a reference aid and will be removed later.



**4.** Weave the sides, working one side at a time. Divide the weavers on one side in half (two groups of four) and weave the halves together. Beginning with the center weavers, cross them and weave both out



to the edge. Weave the second, third, and fourth weavers in the same manner. Tighten the weavers by pulling out the slack. The weaving will poke out where the weavers cross. This is as it should be, and will be the new corner. You'll now have woven a diamond. Secure this side with clothespins. Repeat for the other three sides. All the sides will now have a woven diamond.



**5.** Join the diamonds by weaving them together. Continue weaving as long as you'd like your basket to be tall. You'll notice that if you follow one weaver, it travels from one side of the basket to the other.



**6.** Finish the edge. To make a pointy edge, take two weavers that cross at the edge and fold one over the other and down into the weaving on the inside. Repeat for the other one. Do likewise with all the weavers. If you have holes



in the bottom or sides of your basket, it means that it is not tightly woven. You can fix this by pulling the weavers from the bottom of the basket to the top and taking out the extra length by pulling on the weaver on the inside of the basket. Keep tightening weavers until they are snug against each other. Check the top edge to see that it's even and then trim the ends on the inside.





## PRIMARY

Use the Art Print to introduce a collaborative unit on dance, motion and art. Share the print with students and explain that it depicts a Spanish woman doing a special dance called flamenco. Show students the video that can be found on the website [https://bu.digication.com/eacuna/El\\_Jaleo](https://bu.digication.com/eacuna/El_Jaleo).

Freeze a frame from the video and model for students how to draw a quick gesture drawing depicting the dancer. In another class period, work with the school physical education teacher to teach students the basic moves of flamenco.

Back in the art room, give students paper and pencils and time to draw a picture of their experience. After students have completed their drawings, give them colored pencil or crayons to lay in color. Display the finished drawing with the art print.

## ELEMENTARY

Share the Art Print with students and inform them that the dancer depicted in *El Jaleo* is an excellent example of a gestural pose. Explain that the artist did many preliminary sketches as he observed dancers on a trip to Spain in 1879. Examples of Sargent's sketches can be found at: [http://jssgallery.org/paintings/el\\_jaleo.htm](http://jssgallery.org/paintings/el_jaleo.htm).

Introduce gesture drawing using an articulated mannequin. Place a posed mannequin on each group's table and walk them through the steps of using basic shapes to quickly depict the basic form and gesture.

An excellent lesson plan using mannequins to teach drawing to children can be found at: [www.projectarticulate.org/lessons/gestureFigureDrawing.pdf](http://www.projectarticulate.org/lessons/gestureFigureDrawing.pdf). Give students opportunities to do many three-minute sketches, changing the mannequin's pose at the end of each three minutes. Display the sketches alongside the Art Print.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

John Singer Sargent was a master draftsman who did many preliminary sketches before undertaking a final painting. Share the gesture drawing found at the website, <http://venetianred.net/tag/john-singer-sargent>, and explain

to students it is just one of the many studies Sargent drew in preparation for painting his early masterpiece *El Jaleo*, this month's Clip & Save Art Print. Point out how Sargent used sweeping lines to depict the dancer's body and movement.

Ask students to offer adjectives and phrases that describe the figure. Next, share the Art Print with students and challenge them to describe how the artist incorporated some of the information from the sketch into the finished work. In a separate class period, demonstrate for students how to capture motion, using gesture drawing in the style of John Singer Sargent. Show students footage of dancers, flamenco or otherwise, instructing students to practice drawing the figures in action using the technique.

## HIGH SCHOOL

Share the Art Print with students and introduce or review gesture drawing. A quick tutorial can be found at: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrGnMar2pAI](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qrGnMar2pAI).

Explain to students that Sargent's working process included observing live dancers and sketching their various movements and positions. Show students online examples of Sargent's sketches of Spanish dancers at: [http://jssgallery.org/paintings/el\\_jaleo.htm](http://jssgallery.org/paintings/el_jaleo.htm). Next, share the preliminary study for *El Jaleo* at: <http://sketchplanet.blogspot.com/2011/06/dance-performance-and-theatre-by.html>. This page also includes excellent examples of studies of dancers by artists such as Matisse, Degas and Gauguin. Compare the online sketch with the Art Print.

Engage students in a discussion on how the sketch informed the painting. In another class period or two, take students on a field trip to a dance studio or performance. If your school has a dance class or studio, ask the dance instructor if your students can observe. Students will make sketches of live dancers in motion to use as the basis for a finished work in oil paints.

To learn more about this month's Art Print, read *John Singer Sargent's "El Jaleo,"* by Mary Crawford Volk (National Gallery of Art; March, 1992).







John Singer Sargent (American; 1856–1925). *El Jaleo*, 1882. Oil on canvas; 232 x 348 cm (7' x 11.5').  
Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston, Mass. USA/The Bridgeman Art Library.

# Movement in art

by Colleen Carroll

Clip & Save Instructions: The monthly Art Print is meant to be removed from the center of the magazine, laminated or matted, and used as a resource in your art room.—Editor

## ABOUT THE ARTIST, JOHN SINGER SARGENT

The most famous American painter of the late 19th and early 20th century, John Singer Sargent (1856–1925) actually spent very little time in the United States. Born in Florence, Italy, to American parents, Sargent was educated by his father and his mother, who was an amateur artist. He traveled throughout Europe during his childhood, eventually attending art academies in Italy.

His father arranged for an apprenticeship in the Paris studio of portraitist Emile Auguste Carolus-Duran: he soon became the master's protégé. In 1885, he began his instruction at the École des Beaux-Arts, and by 1877 began exhibiting at the Paris Salon.

In 1879, Sargent traveled to Spain and Northern Europe. During the 1870s and 1880s Sargent painted primarily genre scenes, such as this month's selection, *El Jaleo*.

In 1884, he exhibited what would become his most famous portrait, *Madame Pierre Gautreau*, commonly known as "Madame X."

Said French poet and novelist Judith

Gautier (1845–1917), *"Is it a woman? A chimera, the figure of a unicorn rearing as on a heraldic coat of arms or perhaps the work of some oriental decorative artist to whom the human form is forbidden and who, wishing to be reminded of a woman, has drawn the delicious arabesque? No, it is none of these things, but rather the precise image of a modern*

sions. Although Sargent was perhaps the most masterful portraitist of the 19th century, he said of the genre, "A portrait is a painting with something wrong with the mouth."

Toward the end of his career, he virtually abandoned portraiture, instead turning to landscapes in watercolor, for which he also gained significant

*"You can't do sketches enough. Sketch everything and keep your curiosity fresh."* —John Singer Sargent

*woman scrupulously drawn by a painter who is a master of his art."*

The piece caused a scandal, causing Sargent to relocate to London to escape the notoriety.

After an initial dry period, his services were again in high demand. By 1886, his popularity had crossed the pond, and the painter made his first professional trip to the United States, where he was inundated with commis-

acclaim. In addition to more traditional paintings, Sargent also executed mural projects in the United States.

John Singer Sargent, the "great American painter," died in his hometown of London, England, never having lived more than two years in the country where he chose to retain his citizenship.

For additional biographical information on Sargent, visit: [http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/horo\\_sargent.shtm](http://www.nga.gov/exhibitions/horo_sargent.shtm).

## ABOUT THE ARTWORK

During John Singer Sargent's 1879 travels in Spain, he made many sketches of Flamenco dancers, such as the one depicted in this month's Art Print *El Jaleo*. Although he was an artist who would become known for portraits of the British and American upper class, his painting of a Gypsy dancer in full motion has been described as his earliest masterpiece.

Sargent, a gifted pianist, was drawn to the controlled frenzy of the dance, which in Spanish translates to "ruckus." *"Images like 'El Jaleo' lean toward the daring, risky,*

*unconventional, dramatic, erotically off-center, and odd. Because nomadic Gypsies were believed to ignore ethical principles and exalted superstition over orthodox religion, they endured oppression in numerous countries during the 19th century, but artists and bohemians idealized them as free spirits."* (Source: Trevor Fairbrother, *"El Jaleo," in Eye of the Beholder*, edited by Alan Chong et al. Beacon Press, 2003.)

Sargent has indeed captured the free spirit and energy of both the dancer and the dance. Seen at the pinnacle of the performance, she seems to be in full

twirl. Her energy is repeated in the shallow background as a musician throws his head back in a state of musical ecstasy, while the onlookers to the right move their bodies to the rhythm.

The dramatic shadowing in *El Jaleo* and the painterly brushwork most certainly are an offshoot of Sargent's studies of the Spanish master, Diego Velazquez, whom he studied and emulated.



Go to [artsandactivities.com](http://artsandactivities.com) and click on this button for links to websites related to or mentioned in this article.





by Dan Bartges

**M**ost artists and art teachers would agree that self-confidence plays a very key role in creating good paintings and other artwork. But if an art student's progress is being blocked or limited by a lack of self-confidence, are there ways that he or she can boost that necessary ingredient? The answer is, absolutely! Just ask any winning athlete.

This month and next, we're exploring how self-confidence helps produce better artwork and, more importantly, some specific steps a painter can take—at any age or skill level—to strengthen his or her self-confidence.

As you know, each article in this 10-part series is designed as a lesson, and is an easy way for your students to get involved for extra credit or as a homework assignment.

**HERE'S HOW IT WORKS** For teachers, each month a lesson overview and for-your-eyes-only answers to the current quiz will be presented at the bottom of this page. Students may go online to our special student Web page by clicking on the "Sailing the Seven C's" icon at [www.artsandactivities.com](http://www.artsandactivities.com), where they'll spend a few minutes learning about that month's topic.

Next, they'll print out the "Quiz Me" sheet, write in their answers to three short questions, and hand it in to you as a homework assignment or for extra credit. (The



Go to [artsandactivities.com](http://artsandactivities.com) and click on this button to access the Children's and Teacher's Guides mentioned in this article.



Arranging the paints on your palette in the same order every time will help give you a sense of control over the creative process, as well as save you time when painting.

following month, the answers to the previous month's quiz will be shared online with students.) ■

*Artist Dan Bartges is author of the book "Color Is Everything" ([www.coloriseverything.net](http://www.coloriseverything.net)). He has also written two books on sports: "Winter Olympics Made Simple" and "Spectator Sports Made Simple." Visit his website at [www.danbartges.com](http://www.danbartges.com).*

**MUSEUM CONNECTION** How do you visit a museum? How do you make sense of the art there? Just as you can build confidence in creating art, there are skills you can use to view art with confidence.

When you visit a museum, find a painting you are curious about. Then ask yourself: What do I see? Describe the work to yourself ("I see a woman, in a brightly lit room, she is wearing blue ..."). Keep going until you have noticed all the details. It also helps to talk about what you are seeing with a friend.

Next, make interpretations from what you're seeing. What's going on in this picture? What's the mood of the painting, and how does the artist convey it? If an artist uses bright colors, does that make the composition look energetic? Active? Happy? Excited? What if different colors were used, might that change the mood? Artists make choices.

Try to figure out what the painting is about: What's the story here? What does this scene remind me of? Art is about communication. What is the artist trying to tell us?

You can't see all there is to see in one look, so go back to the painting and look again to see what more you can find. Let the painting tell you its story. Be confident!

To learn more, check out this children's guide which gives pointers for looking at and interpreting artwork: [americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/see\\_for\\_yourself.pdf](http://americanart.si.edu/education/pdf/see_for_yourself.pdf)

Educators: Check out our Teacher Guide, "To See is to Think": [americanart.si.edu/education/video/to\\_see\\_is\\_to\\_think.pdf](http://americanart.si.edu/education/video/to_see_is_to_think.pdf)

—Smithsonian American Art Museum Education Department



A preliminary study (left) will help boost one's self confidence and improve the quality of the finished painting (right). Dan Bartges. *Deep in the Forest*. Oil; 60" x 35".

## TEACHER'S ANSWERS TO THIS MONTH'S STUDENT QUESTIONS

**1Q** According to sports-performance expert, Tim Gallwey, what is "the basic but elusive ingredient for all top performances"? **1A** The ingredient is self-confidence. **2Q** What does the term "inner artist" mean? **2A** "Inner artist" is every person's subconscious capability for artistic expression. **3Q** How do scrimmages help an athlete? **3A** Scrimmages, or practice plays, help improve performance by providing players with a vivid mental grasp of the team's coordinated action for every play, and each player's specific role in those plays.



# Abstract Line Designs

by Nancy Nevinskas

**T**hird-grade students filled their papers with lazy, lumpy and loop-de-loop lines in a lesson I presented as part of a unit on the exploration of line. The unit was composed of two individual line lessons, each received enthusiastically by my students.

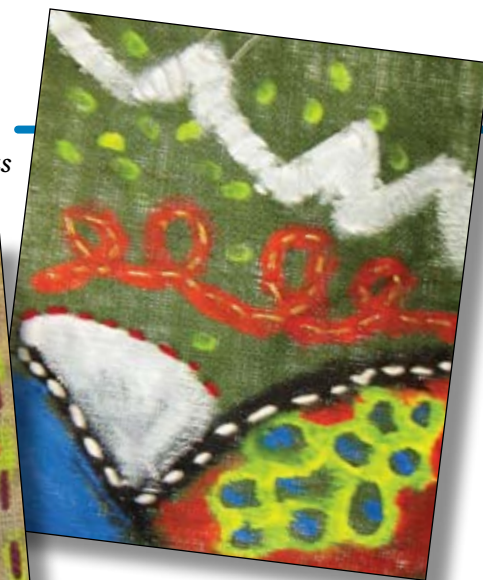
In the first lesson, students were introduced to line as an element of design. They were asked to describe different types of lines, and look for them in art reproductions. Examples of realistic artwork, such as Grant Wood's *American Gothic* and *Young Corn*, and abstract work such as Picasso's *Woman Crying* and *Three Musicians*, were shown.

The students recalled the difference between the two types of artwork, and learned that line is an important element in artwork, regardless of the style of the work. As the students named types of lines, a list was compiled on the board. A handout on different types of lines was also distributed for the students to refer to as they worked.

When they were ready to create their own lines, students were given a 10" x 12" piece of white construction paper and a permanent black marker, and were asked to draw at least six different types of lines that reached from one side of the paper to the opposite side. Many referred to the list on the board and the handout as they worked.

Once the lines were drawn, crayons were distributed, and students began to color in the spaces made by the lines. They were encouraged to use many colors, and experiment with applying different amounts of pressure

see **ABSTRACT** on page 36



## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

### Elementary students will ...

- be introduced to line as an element of design.
- learn the difference between abstract and realistic art.
- use art materials in a safe and responsible manner.
- learn basic sewing stitches and vocabulary associated with sewing.

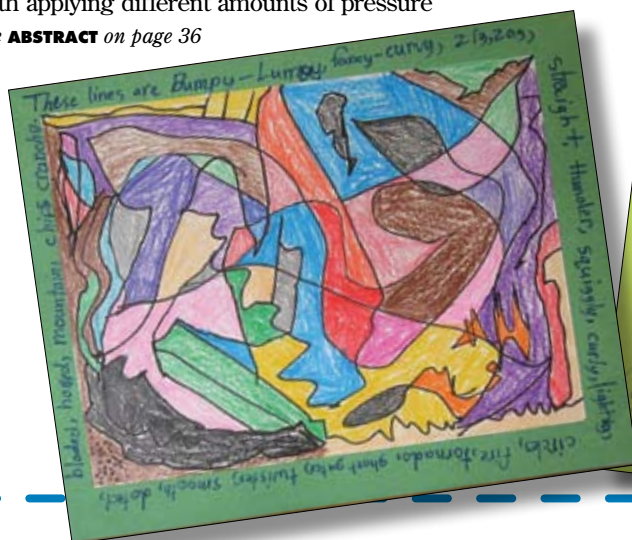
## MATERIALS

### Paper Line Designs

- 10" x 12" white construction paper
- 12" x 14" colored construction paper
- Black permanent markers
- Crayons
- Glue
- Tempera paint in sparkly gold and silver

### Burlap Line Designs

- 12" x 12" pieces of burlap
- Acrylic paints in assorted colors
- Plastic sewing needles
- Yarn in assorted colors
- Cardboard or dowels for mounting





**M**y life would be *nothing* without art. Even when I was 3, I would sit for hours and color, and from a young age, I have been doodling, sketching, painting and sculpting. I remember telling my mom when I was about 9, that I *had* to create things.



Sewing and knitting are also some of my favorite activities. Every available square inch of my room is plastered with art I have created. In my free time at school, I draw portraits of friends.

Sometimes, when frustrated or sad, I use art as a way to feel better. I go into my room and start to draw. This can be when I create my best work. I am fond of saying, "We are all artists, because life is an art." I believe this to be true.

*Renee  
Laventure*

Renee Laventure  
Chester Academy  
Chester, New Hampshire  
Lisa Blanchette, Art Teacher



**Shackleton.** Tempera on paper; 9" x 12". Grade 5.

**Purrr.** Stitched pillow; 9" x 11.5". Grade 5



**Ginger Lady.** Felt, buttons and yarn; 10 inches tall. Grade 5.



**New Beginning.** Watercolor; 10" x 7.5". Grade 5.



# Young ARTIST



**Hello.** Acrylic on cardboard; 11.5" x 11.5". Grade 5.

**Reaching.** Clay; 5 inches tall. Grade 5.



**Mother in the Wind.** Pen and ink; 8" x 6". Grade 5.



**T**rees are great inspiration for artists! As art teachers, many of us find ourselves inspired and maybe somewhat obsessed with the natural beauty and elegance of the lofty tree, and how it changes through the seasons. One such tree that grows in several regions and always looks magnificent, regardless of the time of year, is the birch. This was the inspiration for the "Winter Birch Trees" lesson.

With a little research and much enthusiasm, we began to develop a project that would be easy and successful for even the youngest students. We started by creating a PowerPoint slideshow with information, paintings and photos of beautiful birch trees. Our school was new, so many of our supplies had not yet come in from our vendor. This situation made us rethink techniques and materials, and the results were surprising!

We decided to use pastels for the background. We grouped the pastels into cool, warm and complementary colors to help the students choose what color scheme they wanted for their backgrounds, and discussed color

combinations. We demonstrated warm backgrounds, cool backgrounds and complementary backgrounds.

We also showed students how to protect the bottom of the paper. A piece of 6" x 12" manila paper should be cut out to resemble the snowy ground, and this can be taped gently to the bottom of the paper. If some of the students are not able to keep the bottom of the paper clean, it is easy to fix. Just have them cut a clean piece of 6" x 12" white paper in the shape of the snowdrift, and glue it on top to create clean snow.

After demonstrating the choices of pastel colors, background blending techniques and how to keep the bottom part of their paper clean, we let the students create their own unique backgrounds.

During the next class, we demonstrated how to design the trees using cardboard strips and a small amount of



# WINTER BIRCH

*by Debra Sweeney and Judy Rounds*



Students dipped cardboard strips in black paint to create their tree trunks.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

**Elementary students will ...**

- list warm, cool and complementary colors.
- become aware and appreciate the natural beauty of trees in their environment.
- use and gain experience with different media, techniques and processes.
- observe line, shape and color relationships.
- create a successful piece of art with good composition.

## MATERIALS

- 12" x 18" white paper
- 6" x 12" manila paper or newsprint
- Assorted pastels
- Scissors, glue, erasers and black crayons
- Black tempera
- 2" x 3" cardboard pieces
- Masking tape
- Prints, photos and books with tree images







Go to [artsandactivities.com](http://artsandactivities.com) and click on this button for links to websites related to this article.

## RESOURCES

- *The Art of Bev Doolittle*, by Elise MacLay, Doolittle and Betty Ballantine. Greenwich Workshop Press; 2001.
- *Ortho's All About Trees*, by Jan Johnsen and John C. Fech. Meredith Books; 1999.
- [www.terragalleria.com/pictures-subjects/birch-trees/](http://www.terragalleria.com/pictures-subjects/birch-trees/)
- [www.betterphoto.com/gallery/dynoGall2.asp?catID=1208](http://www.betterphoto.com/gallery/dynoGall2.asp?catID=1208)
- [forestry.about.com/library/weekly/aa070902a.htm](http://forestry.about.com/library/weekly/aa070902a.htm)

**The children's paintings were so impressive, parents couldn't wait to frame them.**

# TREES



black tempera. Starting at the top of a separate sheet of white paper, students dipped the cardboard lightly into the paint, holding the cardboard almost perpendicular. They used a dry-brush technique to stroke small amounts of paint to form the tree trunk. Don't use too much paint—remember, less is more! Although it took some practice, the students got the technique and created several beautiful and realistic birch trees.

For the final step, we first observed the artwork of Bev Doolittle and several other artists to discuss placement and organization in their work. We were then ready to cut out and glue our trees to the pastel background. We removed the tape holding the snowdrifts in place, positioned the trees on the snow background and glued them down.

A discussion about light and shadow was explained and demonstrated. The final step was adding the shadows with black crayons and lightly misting snow over the entire picture. The snow was created by taking an empty spray bottle and filling it with a 50/50 mixture of white tempera paint and water.

The results were so impressive that we decided to hang every student's winter birch tree masterpiece up for display for our new school dedication. The faculty was amazed. The parents couldn't wait until we sent the pictures home so they could have them framed, and the students were so proud! ■

*Debra Sweeney and Judy Rounds are art specialists in the Katy (Texas) Independent School District.*



# Artist Trading Cards

## Connecting with Other Communities

by Deborah Bovio

Sharing art within your community is an experience that is beneficial to everyone involved. At our school, we wanted to find a way to share our passion for art beyond our usual borders. Kids love to connect with other kids, so I set about finding a teacher who was interested in participating in a classroom-to-classroom Artist Trading Card (ATC) exchange.

Creating and exchanging ATCs has been a rapidly growing trend. These miniature works of art are fun to make—and even more fun to share. The intrigue of developing these handmade treasures begins with the intent of creating art simply for the love of art.

To quote Bernie Berlin, author of *Artist Trading Card Workshop*, “The act of sharing artist trading cards knows no geographical boundaries, and brings like souls together on a level that no other form of communication can.”

My first classroom exchange partner was referred to me through a mutual friend. We communicated via e-mail, sharing

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

High-school students will ...

- apply critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to communicate ideas, experiences and stories using a variety of media processes.
- communicate aspects of their lives with students from another part of the world to foster understanding of different cultures.

### NATIONAL STANDARDS

- Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.
- Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas.
- Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures.

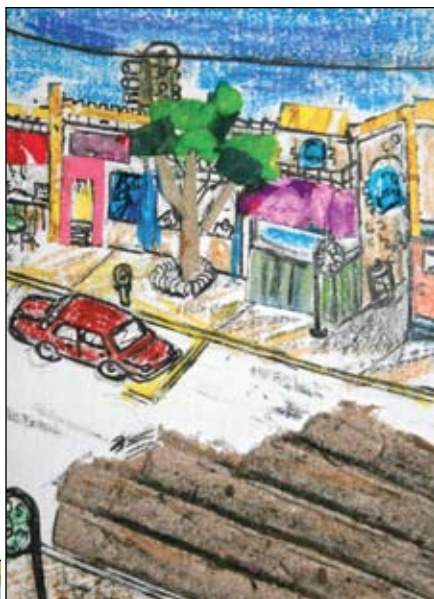


“Red Bike,” Ali.



▲ “Flowers,” Danielle.

◀ “Downtown Rochester,” Heather.



### MATERIALS

- Scrap mat board or cardboard
- Variety of paints, colored pencils, markers and pastels
- Maps, sheet music, book and magazine pages and other ephemera
- Glue and embellishments including: glitter, buttons, sequins, postage stamps, rubber stamps, wire, sand, etc.
- Gloss, mat medium or clear acrylic glaze
- Sandpaper, powdered graphite and shellac



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lesson plans, techniques and a coordinated timeline.

I was eager to tell my students about our long-distance swap. After my brief explanation of the process, the level of enthusiasm the students demonstrated astounded me. They were anxious to create a special gift of art to give away to someone they had never met. Likewise, we all hopefully anticipated of the cards we would receive.

The project began with a day in the computer lab. Finding diverse examples of ATCs turned into a fascinating exploration. My teenage students aren't used to finding out there is something wildly popular taking place online that they are not aware of.

We chose two main techniques for our cards. The first—



**COLLAGE IDEAS** Recycle used materials, such as pages from old map books, sheet music, textbooks, used postage stamps, soda-can rings, gum wrappers and magazines. Incorporate leftover materials from other classes to create 3-D cards. Use broken jewelry, beads, copper foil, sandpaper, wire, rubber stamps, nail polish, gesso-coated string and yarn, fabric, wood shapes, pipe cleaners, buttons and small shells.

Paint or draw on the surface of magazine photos. Gently sand the surface to create a worn, aged effect. If the finished piece lacks harmony, coat the entire surface with a sheer acrylic wash of a single color to create unity.



**METALLIC TEXTURES** Cover the card surface with acrylic modeling paste or tile mastic. Allow to partially dry until the surface is no longer tacky. Use items such as rubber stamps, burlap or a comb to embed a design into the surface, then allow this to dry completely.

Coat the textured surface with a mixture of powdered graphite and shellac. Mix 30 percent shellac (Bullseye brand can be found at most hardware stores), and 70 percent powdered graphite. When dry, gently buff the surface with steel wool to create a metallic sheen.

Use a glue gun to apply random lines and dots of glue to the surface. While it is still warm—but *not hot*—press imitation gold or silver leaf into the glue. Once it has cooled completely, the leaf will pull off easily, but leave the metallic coloring on the glue.

Create textured embellishments from earthen or paper clay, then fire or air dry as directed. Apply acrylic metallic paint. Cover with a wash of black acrylic paint. Wipe excess black paint from the surface, while allowing some to remain in crevices to enhance the texture or design, and to create more contrast with the metallic paint.



## INTUITIVE WATERCOLOR TECHNIQUE

Begin with a full sheet of watercolor paper. Moisten it using a flat, soft brush, or mist with a spray bottle. Use a dropper or brush to apply a generous amount of watercolor paint in various hues to the surface. Allow the colors to bleed into each other naturally, or encourage them to blend by tilting the paper in several directions.

To add more defined shapes, wait several minutes and add more splatters of paint while the paper is still moist, but not drenched.

When dry, cut the paper into 2.5" x 3.5" pieces. Ask students to create recognizable shapes or objects from the abstract watercolor design using a variety of mediums, including colored pencil, paint and permanent markers.



**FINISHING TOUCHES** Re-glue any pieces that may be loose. Use sandpaper to smooth out the rough edges of the mat board. Color the card edges by gliding a permanent marker along the perimeter. To create a uniform surface texture, coat the finished card with spray or brush-on acrylic medium in a matte or gloss finish.

intuitive watercolor—can be implemented successfully by artists of all skill levels. Students are encouraged to explore visual translations of irregular, organic shapes created by blending puddles and splotches of watercolor pigments.

The second technique is a perennial favorite—collage. The options are limitless. My students had some experience with collage techniques, and wanted to continue to explore the use of mixed media.

When we returned to class the next day, some students brought items from home to use on their cards. Scraps of roadmaps, ticket stubs and friendly notes would make their way onto the tiny cards. Likewise, I had put out my box of random junk—every art teacher has one—for them to sift through.

I pre-cut dozens of 2.5" x 3.5" rectangles from scraps of mat board to use as our base. All ATCs are this standard size. Students made several cards each. They worked directly on the mat board, or used cardboard as a sturdy backing for watercolor paper.

First, we saturated full sheets of watercolor paper with water. Next, we randomly applied streaks and blobs of paint, which blended together to form abstracted shapes. We cut the full sheet into ATC-size sections. Students rotated and observed their section of watercolor paper until they recognized a familiar shape. Everyone agreed this was just like staring into the summer sky and imagining characters in cloud forms. Contour outlines and colored pencil accents were applied to define the image.

My students' imaginations went wild while working on the collage cards. They were instructed to build the design with a background, middle ground and foreground. Since they knew much of the background would be covered, most students choose to experiment with simple textures and blending techniques.

One technique, which used powdered graphite mixed with shellac, turned out to be a favorite amongst the students

see **CARDS** on page 30

## CARDS

continued from page 29

because it provided a neutral, yet interesting, surface to build upon. Cut or torn pieces of sheet music or other papers were applied using mat medium mixed with school glue. The middle ground was created using one main focal point, such as a character or symbolic shape. Smaller details and 3-D pieces were added in the foreground.

Finally, we had to decide which cards would be sent to our anonymous friends. It was a difficult choice for some students, as they had become attached to their mini-masterpieces. They were tempted to keep their most successful card. I reminded them of the spirit of sharing our passion for art. I asked them to imagine that they were the person on the receiving end. How would this person view the card? This was an opportunity to reveal an honest reflection of who they are to others. What would that reflection be?

I also reminded them they now had the skill and opportunity to create new cards to share anytime they wanted. With that being said, the students focused on our goal of sharing art for the love of art, and eagerly submitted what they felt were their "best" cards. It was truly an unselfish act of sharing

"on a level that no other form of communication can."

Students wrote a short description of their ATC, including detailed information about the design concept and the techniques and materials used. On the back of the card they included a title, their first name, city, state and year.

A few days later, our swap package arrived. I put the cards facedown in a small box so each student could randomly select one.

The best description I can offer to convey the receiving-day experience would be to compare it to the anticipation an art teacher feels as they open the kiln after a glaze firing. The excitement of the unknown, coupled with the joy of beholding the magical transformation of earthly scraps turned into art, stimulates our curiosity while satisfying our creative desires.

Add to that the feeling each student embraces when they take ownership of the mini-masterpiece that was created just for them. It is a rare opportunity to evoke a simple, yet cherished moment of the day where everyone feels special.

We all enjoyed learning from this collaborative experience. Much like the old adage "two heads are better than one," I found the shared knowledge

and ideas between two classrooms is twice as educational as if we had simply shared amongst ourselves. The lessons learned exceeded the typical art-room experience by expanding our awareness of artists and communities.

As a result of my personal experience, I developed a website devoted solely to promoting ATC exchanges between classrooms "across the hall, across the country or across the world." In the past two years, I have participated in national and international ATC swaps, and always learn something new from each experience. Without leaving the classroom I have made new friends, learned new techniques and gained insight into an array of personal and cultural artistic viewpoints.

If you would like to learn more about classroom ATC exchanges, visit [www.studentatc.com](http://www.studentatc.com). ■

*Deborah Bovio teaches art at Adams High School in Rochester Hills, Mich.*

### RESOURCES

- *Artist Trading Card Workshop* by Bernie Berlin. Northlight Books, 2007.
- [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artist\\_trading\\_cards](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Artist_trading_cards)
- [www.cedarseed.com/air/atc.html](http://www.cedarseed.com/air/atc.html)
- [www.artist-trading-cards.ch](http://www.artist-trading-cards.ch)



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**A**s hands-on environmental observers, children use printing to save and share “treasures” they find. The following thoughts are based on observing what children find valuable and worth saving, and the printmaking processes used to “lift” images from their finds.

**FOUND SURFACES** My daughter, Ana, likes to arrive to school early, before the janitor sweeps “the good stuff” from the floors. As an art teacher, I don’t quarrel with her dedication. I’m not even upset by her many attempts to dismantle our driveway, picking out loose asphalt pieces for her rock and shell collection.

If Ana’s jacket pocket is drooping, it means she had a good collecting day. Admiring something in her collection will prompt her to take out soft papers, wrap it up, then share its gentle rubbing. We frequently take rides to fill her bike basket and my extra pockets with crushed street finds, unusual leaves or part of a comb. We sort out collections after each trip and informally print playful rubbings.

From old clothes I cut off big pockets for students to pin on their own clothing. Outdoor safaris include wearing our special pockets to fill with surface finds. We close our eyes to make trades, making shopping decisions based on what we feel.

Students are welcomed to art class after they have filled specially marked collector bags with precious buttons, caps, chips, keys, etc. Printmaking is about all the objects we gather, objects students can use to stamp, wrap and take rubbings of printed impressions.

**COIN PRINTERS** To fill in the blanks in her coin collection book, Ana makes rubbings of other coins. Children have interesting art collections—like coins—that can be supported and explored in the art class. Rubbing is a universal form of play and a fundamental printmaking technique. Most printmaking techniques start as memorable childhood play. I teach printmaking to experienced printers—students who happily recall their own coin-rubbing days.

Rubbing is also a way to gather, collect and share collections with friends. In our art class, coin collectors make their own coins. We use rubbings and draw over existing coins. Students rub and join parts of different coins, merge redesigned fronts and backs. Children search for circular objects—buttons, checkers, bingo pieces, poker chips, round stickers—as new coin candidates. See-through cardboard coin holders and slide mounts become our frames used to build our own albums of art-minted coins.

We discuss making and preparing our printing surfaces by hammering, carving, drilling and wrapping objects. We look for foil pans and soda cans to crush and print from. In

printmaking sessions, which students call “The Wrap,” we use soft paper to wrap crushed objects and other found textures like tree bark and circuit board sections. Students then rub the soft paper packages to create unique impressions.

To promote looking for textures beyond one art lesson, we make home rubbing kits filled with unwrapped crayons, graphite sticks, tailor’s chalk (a great rubbing tool) and interesting papers. Back in art class we welcome the home rubbing adventures, which yielded such gems as coin wheel-covers for a miniature bicycle built for two elephants, and a sea monster with scary “foreign coin” eyes. A sensitive rubbing of a woven placemat became the background for rubbings of a child’s coin collection. As an example that any place can be represented in a rubbing, one child recreated his room by stapling together rubbings of different parts of the room. A printer’s eye learns to notice everything.

**UNOFFICIAL PRINTERS** When I enter class with plungers and toolboxes in hand, my students suspect a major repair job. They ask what needs fixing and if they can help. I explain how much I love collecting old stampers, especially those forms that are not thought of as stampers. I post an “open” sign over the red toolbox, which houses interesting washers, tire repair parts, furniture leg protectors and a rubber ribbed glove. In the old tackle box, students find squiggly plastic baits for printing and inside the makeup case, they discover lipsticks

see **DIARY** on page 36



**When exploring and making art with children, rekindle the joyous moments of textural awareness and its pleasures in our world.**

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by George Székely

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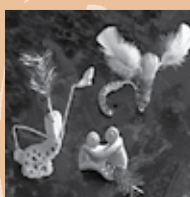
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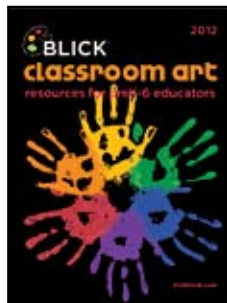
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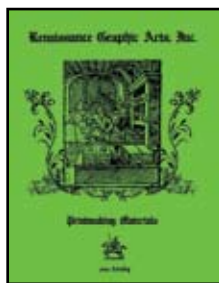


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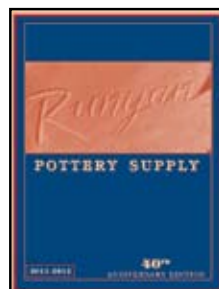
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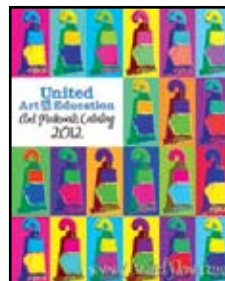
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## DIARY

continued from page 31

used for lip prints on soft tissues.

Adding-machine tapes are unfurled as stamping free-ways in the hall. Art class takes on a printed look as hallway test prints are cut to wallpaper the room. We list home projects for our printmaking: wallpapering a playhouse, printing fabrics for rugs and umbrellas, and making hand-printed signs.

**SUBTLE SYMPHONY** Rubbing is a symphony of subtle pressures resulting in changing impressions. To further contemplate pressures, we hum and buzz as we rub. Gentle to outright loud noises inspire different surface contacts. We rock and rub, dancing and moving the “rolling pin” side of wax crayons or the tips of a lithography crayon.

We press down on objects being printed, exploring pressures, and altering our moves and speed of contact with each surface. In street prints, we bend down to celebrate what is under us. Rubbings help to focus on what is usually ignored so that the ordinary can be looked at with care.

Changing the sounds of crayons brushing over a surface is a way to vary the impressions lifted from it. By rubbing, children find beauty in the surface of objects and feel free to use the object in interpretations, overlapping printed layers, creating new patterns and connections with the lifted

impressions. Paper rubbings are cut apart, reassembled, drawn over and used to construct new prints.

**THE FINAL PRINT** Sitting with my 6-month-old granddaughter Emilie, she amuses herself by reaching behind me, gently rubbing her hands along the texture of the chair. I offer her an alarm clock, a shampoo bottle and a baby-wipe box to play with. While the clock and bottle are alluring, she keeps returning to the box, rubbing her tiny hands against the raised letters on its top.

We print in art class to rekindle the joyous moments of textural awareness and its pleasures in our world. We explore printmaking to stay in touch with patterns and textures—to stay close to collecting samples, building scrapbooks and playing texture games. One cannot be a designer in art media without harboring some of Emilie’s pure joys for the felt and visible textures and patterns in our life. Art teaching, too, often gets caught up in the adult processes and terminologies of printmaking, and we forget to tap into what children already know about it. ■

*Professor George Székely is Area Head and Senior Professor of Art Education at the University of Kentucky, Lexington, and serves on the Arts & Activities Editorial Advisory Board.*

## ABSTRACT

continued from page 24

to their crayons to produce light and dark areas.

Some areas of their paper could be left white, if desired. When coloring was finished, sparkly gold and silver paints were used to enhance the design. As students worked, they realized they were creating an abstract work of art.

Once finished, the designs were glued onto a 12" x 14" piece of construction paper. The final step of the project involved students writing a description of their lines in the border of their work. It was helpful for them to refer to the list of words generated to describe lines they created.

**ADDING A FIBER ELEMENT** The next lesson in the unit involved painting and stitching lines. While students were finishing their written line descriptions, they were called over to a painting area and asked to paint a variety of lines on a 12" x 12" piece of burlap. They received the same basic directions from the previous unit: paint a variety of lines that go from one edge of the burlap to the other. To achieve this, different colors of acrylic paint were available, as were a variety of brush sizes.

During the next class, when their painted lines were dry, students learned they would be sewing around or on top of their lines to enhance their abstract work of art. Basic sewing skills were reviewed and demonstrated.

Students had a variety of yarns to use, including metallic, which was a favorite. They enjoyed sewing around their lines, on top of their lines or criss-crossing their lines with sewing stitches.

Finished pieces were mounted on cardboard for display or could be hung on a dowel, if desired. The students then enjoyed sharing their work with others and describing the lines they painted and sewed. ■

*Nancy Nevinskas teaches art at Henry Lomb School #20 in Rochester, N.Y.*

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Lightfoot/Cartoon Supplies	8	Whittemore-Durgin Glass	6

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3. Number of Issues Published Annually <b>12</b>		4. Annual Subscription Price <b>\$24.95</b>	
5. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (not printer) (street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®) <b>12345 WORLD TRADE DR SAN DIEGO CA 92128</b>			
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It's December and the school year is nearly half over. Time flies when we are having a creative year of nonstop art making. This month's column will focus on fibers, fabric and texture.

## tip #1

**REPURPOSE A SHOE RACK** Maryann Craig from Duncan Creek Elementary School in Gwinnett County, Ga., enjoys teaching lessons using yarn and fabric, but keeping the yarn organized and untangled is always a challenge. So, she bought an over-the-door shoe rack, and now stores yarn, organized by color, where the shoes would normally hang.

This system has helped keep the yarn more organized. The tangling still happens, only not so often and not so tangled. For convenience and safety, she also ties a pair or two of scissors on a string near the organizer.

## tip #2

**PROJECT WEAVING** Here's a great way to use leftover yarn and string. Barbara Boyar, from Ely High School, in Pompano Beach, Fla., has her students

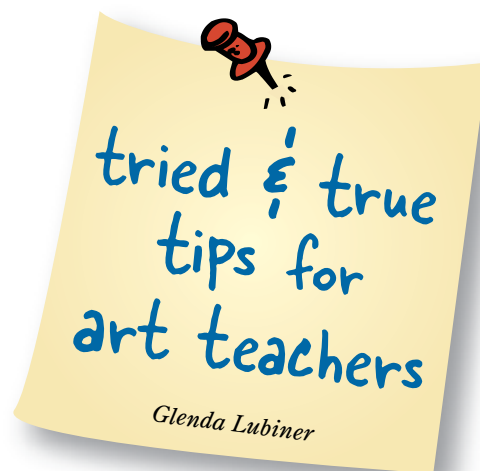
Barbara opts to leave the weaving on the cardboard, but you can discard it if you prefer.

## tip #3

**WEAVING IN LITERATURE** For multicultural projects, Eileen Kuchinsky, formerly of Park Springs Elementary, in Coral Springs, Fla., often pairs a book with the lesson. For example, she'll read *Abuela's Weave* by Omar S. Castañeda (Lee & Low Books; 1995), and tie it with a weaving lesson, such as an "Ojo de Dios." Shirley Climo's *Egyptian Cinderella* (HarperCollins; 1992) can be used, paired with a lesson on Egyptian Collars. Story quilts can be taught when reading Faith Ringgold's *Tar Beach* (Dragonfly Books; 1996). This is an exceptional way to integrate art, multiculturalism and children's literature.

## tip #4

**GOT TEXTURE?** Texture, as we know, is all around us. If you are planning a texture project for teaching the elements of art, weaving or any other fiber project, here are some great places to find some unusual textures.



that also has a variety of textures. Make friends with a store in your school's neighborhood and ask for the scraps.

**HAPPY DECEMBER BIRTHDAY** to Gilbert Stuart, Georges Seurat, Wassily Kandinsky, Gian Lorenzo Bernini, Edvard Munch, Helen Frankenthaler, Friedensreich Hundertwasser, Paul Klee, Louise Bourgeois and Henri Matisse.

Celebrate these birthdays with some fiber/textile art ideas. To honor Seurat, try pointillism by sewing with colored

# Weaving and Texture

cut a shape with an even number of sides from a piece of discarded cardboard or mat board. (It doesn't matter whether it's colored or marked up on.) An octagon works well for this project. Cut half-inch slits all around, about a half-inch apart, or if you are modifying this project for younger children, cut 1-inch slits. Wrap string through the slits across the cardboard in each direction to create your warp and then use more yarn to weave through the string. Beads and feathers are some finishing touches that can be added with thread or glue.

Students used 3-inch plastic needles to do the weaving with yarn. The knots were tied in the back of the work when changing colors. Ribbon or fabric strips can also be used instead of, or in combination with the yarn. If using fabric or ribbon, the students do not need to use a needle.

Go to wallpaper and decorating stores and ask for discontinued books. You'll have a variety of high-quality papers and fabrics to play with. Your local coffee hangout will have corrugated cardboard sleeves that they use for the hot cups. Have your friends collect them for you.

When grocery shopping, ask the meat department if they can spare any unused foam trays that are textured. (The smooth ones are great too, for use in printmaking.) Hardware stores discard odd materials that also work great, like window screening, sandpaper and textured molding.

Framing shops discard mat board

yarn on burlap. Make knots with the yarn to act as the dots. For Gilbert Stuart, how about a portrait of George Washington using black, white and values of gray fabric? Create a mixed-media texture and fiber piece in the colorful style of Hundertwasser. And, superhero soft sculptures are a fun way to introduce Pop art to your class.

Thank you Maryann, Barbara and Eileen for your great tips. We want to wish Eileen the very best on her retirement. Keep sending those tips to [triedandtrue@artsandactivities.com](mailto:triedandtrue@artsandactivities.com).

May you all have a very happy, healthy and creative holiday season. ■

*Glenda Lubiner teaches elementary art at Franklin Academy Charter School in Pembroke Pines, Fla. She is also an adjunct professor at Broward College, and coaches an after-school musical theater/drama club and art club.*

### ATTENTION READERS

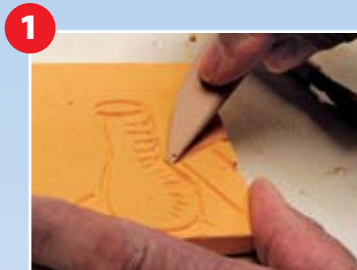
If you would like to share some of your teaching tips, email them to:  
[triedandtrue@artsandactivities.com](mailto:triedandtrue@artsandactivities.com)





# EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO TEACH CERAMICS

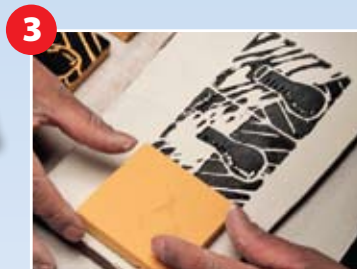
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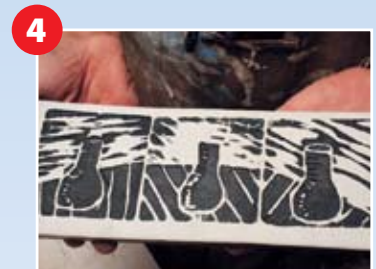
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Elementary School Teacher  
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