

Festival Flowers

(art + social studies)

This project teaches the easiest way to make colorful, three-dimensional paper flowers. Even young children will enjoy painting carnation-like blooms and creating full bouquets for Mother's Day gifts, May Day celebrations, a Cinco de Mayo fiesta or a Hawaiian Luau.

Made using a simple combination of Paper Coiling Core (a product used for basket-making) and watercolor paints, each flower costs just pennies to make. Because the watercolors blend together and form new hues, painting each bloom is a good way to illustrate color mixing.

Grade Levels K-8

Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Cut the paper coil into 10" pieces with a pair of strong scissors. Paper Coiling Core is a soft, white paper (similar to paper towel) bound in a rope-like coil and covered with a thin netting. It will retain a natural curve when manipulated.
2. Dilute Liquid Watercolor with up to 50% water, both to extend it and to make it flow more freely on the paper.



Process

1. Push the netting down 3" from one end of the coil. Squeeze glue over the netting and distribute it around the diameter with your fingers. This will keep the netting from unraveling further. Gently pull the coil of paper apart to form the "petals" of the flower, keeping the bloom above the glue line. Open the petals just enough to accommodate a paintbrush or spritz bottle — the flower can be expanded after it has been painted.
2. While the glue dries, apply watercolor to all surfaces of the petals with a paintbrush. The colors will flow and bleed into one another, so choose colors that are harmonious and avoid mixing complementary colors. The wet petals will be very delicate — wait until they are dry before attempting to shape them. Lay the flower down on a piece of wax paper and paint the stem, one side at a time. Allow the flower to dry completely.



Materials

Paper Coiling Core, 1/2" Dia (60962-1350); one roll will make 120 flowers

Blick® Liquid Watercolor, assorted colors, 8-oz (00369-); share at least three across class

Blick® White Glue, 8-oz (23882-1005); share four bottles across class

Blick® Economy Camel Round Brushes, Size 8 (05153-1008); one per student

Optional Materials:

Holbein® Watercolor Atomizer Bottle, 2-oz (02912-1003)

Blick® Construction Paper, Holiday Green 9" x 12" sheets, package of 50 (11409-7093)

Blick® Art Tissue, Holly Green, 12" x 18", package of 50 sheets (11308-7277)

Hygloss™ Ribbon Rainbow 25-yard assortment (61498-1009)

3. The dry petals will possess more strength and rigidity than wet petals, so gently manipulate them into a pleasing flower shape.

Options

- Mix one part watercolor with one part water in an atomizer bottle. Spritz the color onto the open flower instead of painting. Colors will be softer, but will dry faster and will not be as delicate because less moisture is used overall. Using this process will require less time for the project.
- Cut long, thin triangles or ovals from green construction paper as leaves. Place glue on one end and roll it tightly around the lower part of the stem. Hold it in place until bonded.
- Make a bouquet to display in a vase, or gather several flowers in tissue paper and tie the bouquet with a ribbon.
- Use fluorescent colors, glitter colors or even metallic watercolors to create unusual, artistic effects!

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1 Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes

K-4 Students know the differences between materials, techniques and processes.

5-8 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas.

Content Standard #2 Using knowledge of structures and functions

K-4 Students use visual structures and functions of art to communicate ideas.

5-8 Students generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions and reflect upon these effects in their own work.

