

My Daruma

Inspired by a Japanese symbol of perseverance & good luck

(art + social studies)

Modeled after Bodhidharma, the founder of Zen Buddhism, a Daruma is a Japanese toy that often bears his likeness — no arms or legs, dressed in the red and gold robe of a monk, scowling, bearded, and completely balanced because he had reached enlightenment.

Traditionally made of paper maché and weighted at the bottom so they always return to an upright position, the Daruma symbolizes success, determination, the ability to overcome adversity, and recovery from bad luck.

The eyes of a Daruma are usually blank. After receiving one, the owner fills in one eye when setting a goal, starting a new venture, or making a wish, then paints the other when it has been fulfilled.

Modern Daruma take on many forms and colors. This lesson will encourage students to make a Daruma that either bears their own likeness, or that of an animal they relate to. It will serve as a reminder to never give up on goals and dreams, and as a symbol of personal courage and perseverance.

GRADES 3-12 Note: instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Using a low temperature glue gun, secure a large hex nut in the bottom of each egg. This will provide a balanced weight and keep the egg from falling onto its side. Allow to cool.

Process

1. Pack scrap paper or cloth as firmly as possible in the top of the egg



and around the hex nut in the bottom. This is done so that if the Daruma is dropped and the hex nut breaks free, it won't move around inside the egg. Tape the egg closed with masking tape.

2. Make a mixture of one part Blick's Mix to one part water. The mixture should be solid and clay-like. Cover the egg by holding it firmly in both hands and applying a thin, even layer of the mixture. Set it aside to dry for at least two hours.

Note: drying time may be decreased by placing in a sunny location or in front of a fan.

3. If desired, once the maché is dry, smooth with small pieces of sandpaper. The bottom of the egg may need extra sanding to make sure it is round.

Materials

Plastic eggs

[Surebonder[®] Cool Shot Super Low Temperature Mini Glue Gun](#) (23631-1000); share two among class

Large Hex Nut

[Masking Tape](#), 3/4" x 60-yds (24126-1018); share one roll among class

[Blick's Mix[®] Instant Papier Maché](#), 1-lb box (33102-1006); share two boxes among class

[Blickrylic[®] Student Acrylics](#), assorted color pints (00711-); share five colors among class

Optional Materials

[3M[®] Production Sandpaper](#), medium grit (34916-1504)

[Craft Menagerie Collage Box](#) (60917-1009)

[Liquitex[®] Acrylic Polymer Gloss Varnish](#), 8-oz (00618-2035)





Step 1: Glue a hex nut in the bottom of a plastic egg, then stuff the egg tightly with scrap paper or tissue.

Process, continued

4. The Daruma may be painted as a traditional representation of Bodhidharma, as a self-portrait, or as a favorite animal or character. Acrylic paint will provide the most durable finish, but tempera and watercolors may also be applied to the maché surface.

Options

1. Feathers, ribbons, sequins, and other materials may be glued to the surface as well to make a decorative Daruma.
2. Apply acrylic gloss varnish for a durable, protective finish.

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.
- 9-12** Students apply media, techniques, and processes with sufficient skill, confidence, and sensitivity that their intentions are carried out in their artworks.

Content Standard #4 — Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

- K-4** Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art.
- 5-8** Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in various eras and cultures.
- 9-12** Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art.



Step 2: Cover the egg with Blick's Mix and allow it to dry for at least two hours.



Step 3: Paint the Daruma with the likeness of a character or animal.