



Bottle Cap Mosaics

Art Projects in Conjunction with Washed Ashore

Project Title: Bottle Cap Mosaics

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Objectives:

1. Students will use found/collected bottle caps to create a collaborative mural of their choice.
2. Students will learn what marine debris is and why it is harmful to our environment.
3. Students will learn what they can do to help, including the art they are creating today.

Teaching Points: According to the Ocean Conservancy, bottle caps are the one of the top 10 objects found washed up on beaches. This project aims to inspire ocean conservation through showing students that each bottle cap used for their mosaic was a piece of potentially harmful pollution and to spark conversation of what could be done to help! Asking students why we care that plastic are in the ocean and why they think it could be harmful is a wonderful way for them to start building their own ideas of what pollution and marine debris is, why it harms our oceans and what each of them could do specifically!

Materials:

- Multiple colors of plastic bottle caps
- Large piece of board or plywood (at least 2' x3')
- Pencils or markers to draw
- Non-toxic tacky glue or caulking
- Option: Image to replicate for the mosaic design

Process:

1. Collaboratively choose or design an image to create a mosaic of. For example, the students might want to choose a well-recognized painting like Van Gogh's starry night or a common animal or decide to draw their own nature/underwater scene. Make sure it is somewhat simple and easy to replicate. Using simple color patterns and shapes will create success. Re-making it with bottle caps will make it resemble the technique of pointillism.
2. Collect bottle caps. Try to get bottle caps of various colors – save ones you use, ask your friends to save theirs and pick up bottle cap litter.
3. Clean bottle caps. Soak the caps in warm soapy water to get the sugar and grime off of them.
4. Sort bottle caps. Sort the bottle caps by color depending on the colors in the mural. You may want to group together warm colors, cool colors or be very specific separating light blues from dark blues.
5. On the board, draw the outline of the images or design of the mural.
6. With colored markers , label or signify the color scheme.

7. Work together to place the bottle caps in the correct places. Communication is key! Option: It might be beneficial to place multiple bottle caps down without glue first as a 'test' so everyone can approve of colors, design and have a better idea of process.
8. To organize efficiently students can be in charge of single colors throughout the process.
9. Put a small dot of glue on the bottom/flat side and place in the appropriate space.
10. Work from the inside of the piece to the outer edge. Because bottle caps are not malleable some might 'overflow' over the edge of the piece.
11. When working on a large piece it is helpful to lean it against a wall and look at it from farther away. This will give you a better overall sense of color and design.
12. Be creative! Use bottle caps of different sizes to make it more interesting.

Other options:

- Cut the board or wood into different shapes and sizes to create animals, plants, abstract figures or even portraits.
- It is sturdier if the bottle caps are nailed or screwed to the board. For a longer lasting mural this is a more durable approach.

Photo References & more ideas!

<http://www.artgrange.com/michelleworkshop.html>

<http://eyes aflame.blogspot.com/2009/04/plastic-bottle-cap-madness-and-bit.html>