

Nature Painting

In this activity, you will be creating natural paint from items that can be found around the house, the back yard, or in your fridge. What colours and ingredients will you come up with?

Location: Around the house

Materials:

- Paintbrush
- Paper
- Hammer
- Safety glasses
- Cups (one per paint colour)
- An old shirt/magazine/newspaper
- A blender
- Natural materials found around home (e.g. rocks, berries, leaves, etc.)

Duration: ~30 minutes

Age Range: Ages 5 and up

Activity:

Your paint-making method will depend on the materials you find:

Paint from Rocks

Soft rocks make the best paint because they are easy to process. A commonly found soft rock is one made of clay. Clay-based rocks are often found in areas near creeks, streams, and rivers. These rocks are a rich red-brown, like the colour of a terra cotta flowerpot. Whether your rock is clay-based or not, it must be soft enough to turn into paint. To test the softness of your rock, throw it down onto a hard surface. If it breaks, it is soft enough for paint.

- 1) Place your rock between several folds of an old shirt. You may also use newspaper or a magazine.
- 2) Put on some safety glasses and use a hammer to hit the rock into pieces.
- 3) When you unfold the shirt, you should see your rock has broken down into fine pieces, maybe even powder. The finer the pieces, the better the paint. You may need to cover the rock and hit it a few more times to get your desired result.
- 4) Pour the rock powder into a glass and add water sparingly – just enough to create a paint-like consistency. Adding more water results in a lighter colour; adding less water creates a more saturated colour.
- 5) Now you're ready to paint yourself a masterpiece!

Paint from All Other Materials

Look for materials around your home you could turn into paint. Anything non-toxic and soft enough to go in a blender will do. Here are some suggestions:

- Green: grass, leaves, spinach, lettuce
- Yellow: yellow onion skin, lemon peel

- Red: cherries, strawberries, red flowers
- Purple: blueberries
- Dark brown: soil, coffee grinds

- 1) Take your found items and mix them in a blender with a very small amount of water (again, only enough to create a paint-like consistency).
- 2) Pour your homemade paint into a cup and paint yourself a picture!

For Teachers: See below for links to the Ontario curriculum

Grade	Elements of Design	Principles of Design
Grade 1	<i>colour:</i> mixing of primary colours (red, yellow, blue); identification of warm (e.g., red, orange) and cool (e.g., blue, green) colours	<i>contrast:</i> light/dark; large/small; pure/mixed colour
Grade 2	<i>space:</i> overlapping of objects to show depth	<i>repetition and rhythm:</i> repetition of colour and shape in patterns
Grade 3	<i>line:</i> variety of line (e.g., thick, thin, dotted)	

Share with us!

We want to see how your masterpieces turned out! Share with us over by using the hashtag #RBGathome or tagging us at @RBGCanada.