

"Decoupage Habitats" *adapted from a lesson by Anna Musselman*

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Audubon at Francis Beidler Forest

Overview: Students are introduced to an art form called decoupage as they decorate the cover of their science journal. They will use this art form to focus on a specific habitat and the birds that inhabit that area.

Connection to the Curriculum: This activity blends art, science and geography into a high-interest, hands-on creative opportunity for students. The ease of the art form maximizes the likelihood that students will create quality work for which they can be proud and through which they will learn about a specific habitat and its avian residents.

- K-2.1 Recognize what organisms need to stay alive (including air, water, food, and shelter).
- 2-2.3 Explain how distinct environments throughout the world support the life of different types of animals.
- 3-2.3 Recall the characteristics of an organism's habitat that allow the organism to survive there.
- 4-2.2 Explain how the characteristics of distinct environments (including swamps, rivers and streams, tropical rain forests, deserts, and the polar regions) influence the variety of organisms in each.
- 5-2.4 Identify the roles of organisms as they interact and depend on one another through food chains and food webs in an ecosystem, considering producers and consumers (herbivores, carnivores, and omnivores), decomposers (microorganisms, termites, worms, and fungi), predators and prey, and parasites and hosts.
- 6-3.2 Summarize the basic functions of the structures of animals that allow them to defend themselves, to move, and to obtain resources.
- 7-4.2 Illustrate energy flow in food chains, food webs, and energy pyramids.
- 8-2.1 Explain how biological adaptations of populations enhance their survival in a particular environment.

Suggested Grade Range: K-8

Time: 60 min

Materials:

Brought by Student:

1. One composition book science journal for each student
2. Clippings from magazines for each student
 - a. One large background photo and small overlay photos

Supplied by Teacher

1. 1.5 bottles of Mod Podge for every 100 students (WalMart -- \$6.00 a bottle)
2. 3 inch foam brushes (12-14)
3. 1 inch foam brushes (20-24)
4. Scissors for each group
5. 11 x 17 paper work mat for each student or large paper plate

6. Small-size paper plates for Elmers glue and Mod Podge.
7. Large refill bottle of Elmers glue
8. Popsicle sticks (one per student)
9. Buckets of clean water for clean up; brushes need only be rinsed and dried
10. Markers for title page
11. Additional sources for habitat and animal images (magazines [*National Geographic Magazine*, outdoor themes, photography, environmental organizations] and old calendars)

Objectives:

1. SWBAT create a personally-pleasing cover for science journal. (Creates ownership of book)
2. SWBAT describe the habitat shown on the cover of their journal, including the diets and interactions of the bird species they selected.

Procedures:

Before class:

1. Assign students to bring in a composition book and a variety of images (one showing a habitat large enough to fill the outside cover of the book and multiple images showing birds that would inhabit that area). If the focus of the lesson changes (predator/prey relationships, food chains), the types of images required can be adjusted.
2. Students will be responsible for describing the habitat shown on the cover of their journal, including the diets and interactions of the bird species they selected
3. Set up string a drying line for the wet journals.

In class:

4. Give directions for the title page on the first inside page. This should include a title (Arid Avians, etc), the author (student name) and the publisher (5th period).
5. Distribute markers for students to set up their title page.
6. Give directions for decoupage
 - a. Have composition book and photos placed on work mat. (Vertical placement of mat is best.) Paper plate work well.
 - b. Explain that Elmers glue will be used to attach images to book. Place some Elmers glue (approximately 1 ½” in diameter) on a small plate labeled "Elmers".
 - c. Suggest that students affix their large image to the book to serve as a background. To do this, use the 1 inch brush to paint **the book** cover completely with Elmers glue and carefully press on the image ensuring that the edges are well tacked down. Lay the popsicle stick flat on the image and gently smooth out any bubbles. Trim edges of the image to match the book's cover.
 - d. Smaller pictures will be glued to background as the student see fit (flying birds need not be in the sky; hummingbirds may dwarf nearby eagles). Ripping the edges around the smaller images works to produce softer edges for those images. Emphasize that the edges of pictures must be especially secure so they don't pop up when applying decoupage. Using the 1 inch brush for the Elmers, show how to move the glue from center of picture to edges.
 - e. Once all images are glued down, the students should ASK for the Mod Podge. It is not distributed all at once to prevent it from drying out. Small amounts will be poured onto small plates labeled “Mod Podge” with students asking for more as needed.

- f. Mod Podge is applied with the 3 inch foam brushes. Students should apply an even coat (until the cover is pale white) with strokes going every which way and off the edge of the book.
- g. Hang the journals over the line and allow to dry 10-15 min. A second coat of Mod Podge (not necessary) can be added for additional durability.

Suggested Evaluation:

1. Describe the habitat on the cover of your science journal, including its general location, annual precipitation, average summer and winter temperatures, and general vegetation.
2. Choose three of the birds you placed on the cover of your science journal. For each bird, describe its diet, its threats, and any adaptations it has for its habitat.

Extending the Lesson:

Resources:

1. Numerous “how to” Internet sites.

