ART ACTIVITY

PAPER MARBLING

Explore color and tell stories through creating beautiful marbled papers with shaving cream.

Age/Grade  All

Materials

- Paper: Variety of thickness, cardstock, fabric
- Shaving cream
- Food coloring or liquid watercolors
- Popsicle stick or fork
- Trays or pie tins
- Squeegee (or straight edged tool like ruler or thick cardboard)
- Paper towels

For Collaging + Bookmaking
- Pencils
- Markers
- Scissors
- Glue stick
- Stapler
- Optional: Short story or book

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PAPER MARBLING

Artmaking Directions

1. Spray shaving cream into tray. TIP: Hold can upright to avoid letting out too much air.

2. Use squeegee (or flat edge) to smooth out and flatten a layer of shaving cream in the tray.

3. Drip chosen colors in vertical or horizontal lines onto shaving cream.

4. Use a popsicle stick to swirl the colors together—like decorating a cake! TIP: Do not over mix or colors will get muddy cracks.

5. Lay paper down in the shaving cream. Gently rub the back with your fingers until you see the color has absorbed through the whole sheet.

6. Grab a corner to lift up the paper and lay it down on another tray or on the table.

7. While holding one corner of the paper with a finger, gently drag the squeegee (or flat edge) over the surface of the paper to remove the excess shaving cream. TIP: You may have to wipe the squeegee and do it a second time to remove all of the shaving cream. Do not squeegee too hard or you will rip the paper.

8. Allow the paper to dry. TIP: Put papers under heavy books so they dry flat.

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Activity Ideas

Color Wheel + Mixing (K–5) // Create a Color Wheel with dyed shaving cream. Identify primary and secondary colors. What happens when you mix these colors? How do you make brown?

Marbled Journals (6–8) // Create a book for sketching, journaling, or collaging!
- Choose one of your marbled papers and fold in half.
- Cut copy paper to size and fold in half.
- Insert into your cover and staple the center to secure.

Write + Illustrate a Story (K–12) // Read a short story or illustrated children’s book. Discuss and identify the five elements of a story: characters, setting, plot, conflict and resolution. Write your own story or poem and then illustrate it through collage using your marbled papers. What colors and textures will illustrate your story best? Create a series of scenes and bind it together into a mini storybook.

Resources

The Internet Archive’s Open Library gives you virtual access to thousands of books for all ages. The Children’s section features classics like Alice in Wonderland, The Wizard of Oz, and Harry Potter. Free to read or borrow online.

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