ART ACTIVITY

RAINBOW DYED BUTTERFLIES

Create fantastical butterflies from materials found in your kitchen! Explore color mixing through various dyeing techniques to produce vibrant wing designs.

Age/Grade  K–8

Materials

• Coffee Filters
• Food Coloring
  (Alternatives: watercolor paint, watered down acrylic, dye)
• Spray Bottle with Water
  (Alternative: cup of water with paintbrush)
• Clothespin
• Markers or Acrylic/Craft Paint
• Small Paintbrush(es)
• Tray or Washable Surface
• Pipe Cleaner
• Scissors
• Optional: Googly Eyes, Gems, Beads, Buttons, Glitter

Resources

Check out these other fun Virtual and Self-Guided Tours from the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences!

More to Explore

Natural Dyes: Did you know many of the foods found in your kitchen can create vibrant dye colors? Experiment dyeing and stamping your coffee filters with coffee grounds, teas, turmeric spice, or beets!

Virtual Tour: Take a virtual tour of the North Carolina Museum of Natural Science’s Living Conservatory to discover a tropical ecosystem of butterflies, turtles, and some other surprising friends!

Share your creations with us! Tag us: @artspacenc #ArtspaceAtHome
**RAINFOREST DYED BUTTERFLIES**

**Artmaking Directions**

TO CREATE THE WINGS //

1. Lay out your coffee filters in a tray or washable surface. Layer two to four coffee filters together - you can separate them once dry. Drip food coloring or alternative dye into designs on the coffee filter.

2. Spray or add water with a brush and watch the colors swirl and mix! You can add more dye and water until you are happy with the design - be careful not to overmix or the colors will become muddy.

3. Allow the filters to dry completely. You can use a hair dryer to speed it up!

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RAINFOVER DYED BUTTERFLIES

Artmaking Directions

TO CREATE THE BUTTERFLY //

1. Choose 2 colored coffee filters to become your butterfly’s wings.

2. Decorate a clothespin for your butterfly’s body using markers and/or paint.

3. Accordion or fan fold both coffee filters.

4. Stack the folded filters on top of each other and fold them together in the center.

5. Clamp the folded center into the clothespin.

6. Spread out the wings by gently pulling apart the folded filters.

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ARTMAKING DIRECTIONS

7. Bend a piece of pipe cleaner to make antennas for your butterfly.

8. Clamp the antennas securely into the clothespin.

9. Embellish your butterfly body and wings with googly eyes, pom poms, gems, buttons—whatever you like!

**Fun Fact:** Butterfly wings are actually transparent! Their wings are covered in scales that reflect light, producing all of the beautiful colors seen in their wings.

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