



Rainbow Fish and Brilliant Birds

Grades 6–12

*Lesson plan by Eric Orr, Sax Art Consultant,
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Cross-Curricular — Sculptural/3D Materials

Description:

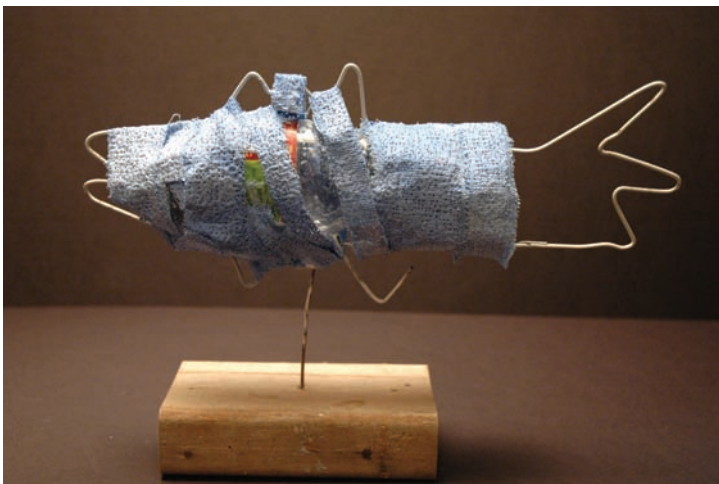
Art curriculums are often heavy with 2-D lessons and light on 3-D sculptural activities. Recyclables and wire clothes hangers often cover us up! This lesson puts recyclables to good use in a sculptural manner. Art teachers frequently fear the “mess” involved with plaster sculpture. This lesson presents an easy less-messy technique by constructing sculptures using water sprayed plaster strip-covered recyclables; outlined with clothes hangers....and the pre-colored plaster strips preclude painting!

Motivation:

Have students view pictures of realistic and abstract 3-D sculptures. Stress that sculptures are designed to be viewed from many sides. Subject matter might be fish or birds (as there is no right or wrong way to make these critters) ...subject might also be architecture, artwork in the style of an artist, figures in action, pop sculpture, favorite foods, aliens, etc.



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Directions:

Teacher preparation: Cover tables; put dish pans in sinks to prohibit plaster from clogging the drain. Students might want aprons/paint shirts.

National Standards:

Content Standard #1: Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes.

Content Standard #2: Using a knowledge of structures and functions.

Content Standard #3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas.

Content Standard #2: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.

With the students:

- 1 Unwind wire coat hanger, clip off and dispose of the twist.
- 2 Form the outline or frame of the sculpture using pliers to show major details. Try to leave several inches of wire at one end to be inserted into the wood block base, or for even more stability, plan sculpture to be anchored into base at two points, beginning and end. Try to keep the wire in as few pieces as possible for stability; how ever you may add additional wire onto it.
- 3 Once sculpture outline is finished, select a wood base, sand it and mark and drill one or two 3/32" holes wherever sculpture outline wires end (make sure they are very straight with pliers).

Materials:

Sax® Professional Colored Plaster Wrap	(9-409130-705)
Galvanized Soft Annealed Stovepipe Wire — 18 or 20 gauge (fine) wire	18-GA (9-238107-705) 20-GA (9-463808-705)
9001 Glue	(9-403949-705)
Sax® True Flow® Tempera Varnish	(9-406667-705)
Poly-Bottle with Trigger Spray	(9-468755-705)

Wire coat hangers, wood block base (2"x 4"x 5")
Recycled materials to fill out form: drink cans, plastic water and drink bottles, small food boxes, egg cartons, newspaper, styrofoam, cardboard tubes etc., plastic bags, masking tape, string

For decorating:

feathers, fabric, chenille stems and wiggle eyes etc.

Optional for finishing wood block base:

sandpaper, acrylic paint or wood stain, brushes, Sax® True Flow® Tempera Varnish.

Tools:

Drill and 3/32" twist bit (just a little larger than coat hanger wire diameter), pliers, wire cutters, scissors, water spray bottle, towels to wipe hands

- 4 Stand wire sculpture outline into block hole(s) and glue. Cover block with a plastic bag to protect it from plaster.
- 5 Fill in wire sculpture outline with recycled trash and wadded newspaper, securing the items with fine wire, string or masking tape. You may also want to use fine wire to add details.
- 6 Select plaster strip colors you desire (choice of yellow, red, blue, green and orange), cut strip widths with scissors that best smoothly cover the sculpture. The tighter the radius, the thinner the strips.
- 7 Apply strips dry and spray with water bottle, smoothing and joining strip edges and ends with fingers. No dipping allowed!
- 8 Continue adding dry strips, spraying and smoothing each until the sculpture is filled out and covered. The great feature of this spray system of working is that sculpture may be stopped and re-started.
- 9 When dry, add details (wiggle eyes, feathers, cloth, chenille stems etc).
- 10 Remove protective plastic from base block and paint or stain wood block to compliment your sculpture.... base can even be covered with plaster strips!
- 11 When dry, brush sculpture with Sax True Flow Tempera Varnish.