

#### ART FORM

Visual arts

#### LEARNING AREA

The Arts

#### SUBJECT

Art & design

#### TARGET GROUP

Key Stage 1 and 2  
(Years 3 – 7)

#### MATERIALS

Withies (willow) or plastic tubing (15-24 inch length per child)

Crepe paper

Pipe-cleaners (Chenille ones provide variety of colour and texture)

Wool or string

Masking tape

Buttons or beads

Feathers

Sequins or other decorations

Scissors

Small tubs

#### SPACE

Classroom (Since this is 'dry art work' you will not need access to running water.)

#### PREPARATION

Allow 30 minutes. See instructions for Advanced preparation.

#### DURATION

60 minutes

#### ARTIST'S INTRODUCTION

This workshop was devised for the Belfast Children's Festival 2003. Its aims were to allow the children to create their own dream catcher using a varied and colourful selection of appropriate materials.

After basic instruction at the beginning of the session the children were supported in making their own decisions as to the design and decoration of their work. This is an important element of the workshop; the children should be allowed the freedom to select the materials which most appeal to them and to devise their own ways of attaching these materials.

By supplying the children with a broad range of materials in different colours the results will be exciting and original. This workshop is accessible to children from 7-11 years old and also to those less able children who may need a little extra help sticking and tying.

The important thing is that making dream-catchers is fun and by providing bright colourful papers, beads, pipe-cleaners and feathers, each child will be able to create an enjoyable artwork which can be hung at home or in school.

The children can work in small groups with each group having the full range of materials available for easy handling. I limited the numbers I could comfortably work with to 15 at a time, so for larger groups I would suggest a classroom assistant be present, as some children need help with tying of knots and threading, which can be a bit fiddly.

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

Pupils will have opportunities to develop:

- Communication skills – discussion with group, teacher and assistants, developing language, forming questions, learning key words, expressing feelings and emotions about dreams, good and evil etc
- Problem solving and decision making – ability to devise, shape and structure an artifact through negotiation, selection of materials, making choices etc
- Creative skills – using imaging ideas to structure a dream catcher, use story, visual and images etc to create a new outcome
- Working with others – work cooperatively with group

## INSTRUCTIONS

### Advance preparation

- Cut the withies or plastic tubing into lengths (anything from 15-24 inches, depending on how big you want the dream catchers to be).
- Cut the crepe paper horizontally into strips across the folds to produce paper ribbons.
- Sort the smaller materials into tubs, for distribution between work groups.
- Download the Dream catcher legend.

### Getting Started (5-10 mins)

Sometimes it can be helpful to begin an Art session with a song, a poem, or a story. For this workshop you may wish to recount the legend of the dream catcher (download it from the Toolbox website).

### Assembling the hoop frame (10-15 mins)

- Carefully bend the prepared withies/plastic tubing into a circle and secure the end with masking tape.
- Wrap lengths of crepe paper ribbons around the circle until it is entirely covered, securing the ends of the paper to the circle with tape.

You now have an outer frame.

### Making the web (15-20 mins)

- Now, twisting pipe cleaners together, make smaller circles to fit inside each other and the outer frame.
- Lay the circles on a flat surface, inside each other.
- Again using pipe-cleaners make radial spokes to join the inner circles to the outer frame.

You now have a basic shape ready to decorate.

### Making it your own (10-15 mins)

The basic structure you have developed can be personalized in an almost infinite variety of ways. It can be simply embellished by threading beads and buttons on to string and then attaching them to the structure. Or pipe-cleaners can be woven around or hung within the circle.

Enjoy the texture, the colour, the feeling of handling the variety of materials provided. Encourage tying, twisting, knotting and wrapping to allow complex patterns and shapes to develop.

Finally expand outside the outer circular frame by stringing beads and tying feathers to lengths of string to hang from the frame. Secure another length of string to the outer frame making a loop to prepare the dream catcher for hanging.

## TEACHER'S TIPS

Remember to allow the children the freedom to make choices about their art work. The session should be structured without being rigid.

Use your imagination; children love to use theirs when decorating.

## LINKS TO OTHER LEARNING AREAS

While this is primarily a workshop supporting art & design, it can be used to develop learning in other areas:

- The world around us – supporting cultural awareness
- Science and technology – balance, shape and movement
- Geography and history – American Indians, traditions and culture
- Environment – looking at how you might represent a spider on a web
- Language and literacy – expressing and justifying thoughts, feelings and opinions
- Maths and numeracy – sorting materials, using diagrams, interpreting findings, exploring symmetry
- Personal development – developing motor skills in crafting artefact (fixing, joining etc) developing confidence in working with others and making a dream catcher

### FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS

Use the finished Dream catchers as an opportunity to discuss the following:

- Good and bad dreams.
- The importance of having visions, and goals
- The stages and cycles of life
- The influence of good and bad forces

Use the story of the Dream catcher to look at other cultures from around the world and the different ways these cultures express themselves through arts.

Having mastered the fine motor skills required in making dream catchers, pupils can undertake to make the following:

Individual figure modeling (using pipe cleaners/chenille pipe cleaners)

Grouping individual figures in a hanging mobile structure, representing e.g., my family tree; people/animals we care for; stages in the cycle of life.

Look at the work of other artists, not to slavishly copy, but to provide inspiration. It can give a starting point for further discussion about how the artist has made their representation. Here are some suggestions:

Joan Miro, and Paul Klee (for abstract landscape/people/animals).

Alexander Calder (for wire modeling/mobiles)

Giacometti (for figurative modeling)

Picasso (for line drawing/ painting)

**Don't forget to send feedback to [toolbox@youngart.co.uk](mailto:toolbox@youngart.co.uk)**

**[www.youngart.co.uk/toolbox](http://www.youngart.co.uk/toolbox)**