

#1 - Box City

Grade Level: K-6



Description/Objective

Children gain an awareness of three dimensional space, balance and composition by constructing a city from small boxes and other "throw-away" items.

Time

2 to 3 Hours (at one time or over 2-3 days)

Materials - (ask students to help collect these items over a 1 to 2 week period)

Small empty boxes (toothpaste, jello, fruit wrinkles, etc.).

Corks (wine bottle size - 1 per student)

Popsicle sticks (5 per student)

Wood scraps (3 per student)

Old spools (1 per student)

Wire scraps

White Glue (one container per student)

One glue gun and several glue sticks

Silver spray paint (2-3 cans depending on size of group)

Sequins (selection)

Paper scraps of assorted colors

Approximate 18" x 24" piece of cardboard for each student (one larger piece if group project)

Procedure

1. Ask students what they do with the trash in their house . Specifically ask if they ever find uses for it other than throwing it away. Many households recycle their trash. Sometimes artists use trash to create artwork. A good example is the Watts Tower in Los Angeles, a famous sculpture built of trash. Show a picture of Watts Tower if available.
2. Place a pile of boxes, assorted shapes and sizes where visible to all the students. Tell them that boxes, along with other throw-aways, will be used to create a city sculpture.
3. Demonstrate how boxes can be combined with popsicle sticks, wood scraps, corks, etc., to make buildings.
4. Students choose their boxes and other materials and glue pieces together with white glue. A glue gun should be available for hard-to-stick pieces. Adult needs to supervise use of glue gun.
5. When buildings are complete they should be spray painted silver by teacher.
6. Scrap paper can be cut out and glued on for doors and windows. Sequins can be glued on for lights.
7. Optional. When all buildings are complete, students as a group, can arrange them on a large piece of cardboard, being very aware of the negative space (space between shapes) that they are creating.



Subject Matter Integration

MATH: Have students measure the height of each building and made a bar graph showing the progression of heights. Population trends can be explored as well.

LANGUAGE ARTS: Have each student write a story about the city they created, naming it, giving its location and describing who lives there.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE: Explore the recycling processes.

Variations/Extensions

1. Students can use the same materials as above, but glue them together to form spacemobiles, robots or cars of the future.
2. Students can use wood scraps instead of cardboard boxes.
3. Students can use tempera paint and markers to decorate their creations as an alternative to silver spray paint.