

Art in Nature

Learning Objectives:

Children would have opportunities to:

- Talk about basic elements of art (i.e. colour, shape, and texture) observed in the natural environment
- Create a 3-dimensional artwork on their own
- Talk about their own artwork

Overview:

In this activity, the K2 children applied their prior knowledge on the basic elements of art (i.e. colour, shape, and texture) to describe the plants they saw and touched in the garden. They then created a 3-dimensional model of a tree based on their observations.

Stages of the activity

1. To invite children's interest on elements of art found in the natural environment, close-up photographs of different parts of the plant, such as the stem, leaf and flower were projected on a screen. The close-up photographs were carefully selected to show particular elements of art in the natural environment. The children then played a guessing game and guessed the plant part that was shown.



*Tree trunk
showing texture
of bark*



*Leaf showing lines and
texture*



*Flower showing
shades of colours*

After the guessing game, the teacher brought the children to look at the plants and trees in the school garden. There, the children had the opportunity to explore further the elements of art found in the natural environment, as they used their sense of touch to explore the texture of different plants and leaves, and their sense of sight to look for different colours and shapes of leaves and flowers.



Children exploring and observing the different plants in the garden

2. After their exploration in the garden and observing how the different parts of the plant looked and felt like, the children gathered back in class to share their observations. Children's responses were recorded by the teacher and they learnt to use words like "round", "big", "rough" and "sharp" to describe the shapes and textures of the plants they observed.
3. To provide children with the opportunities to apply their new knowledge of the different colours, shapes and textures found in nature, the class embarked on an activity to create a forest of their own. Materials like brown paper bags, coloured papers, glue and scissors were provided for the children to create a three-dimensional artwork of a tree.



4. The teacher scaffolded children's creation of the artwork by demonstrating how the art materials may be used to create colours, shapes and textures to represent what they have observed in the garden. For example, to make the tree trunk and branches using brown paper bags, we could cut strips from the paper bag and create branches with a rough texture by twisting the strips together.
5. The children were then invited to create their own 3-dimensional "tree" artwork using the materials provided. Besides the texture of the tree trunks, the children also cut and tore leaves out of coloured paper in different shapes and sizes to represent the leaves that they had seen earlier, before assembling them into unique "Paper Bag Trees".
6. The children were invited to talk and share with the class their artwork. This provided opportunities for them to talk about how they have used the elements of art (i.e. colour, shape and texture) in creating a realistic-looking "tree" artwork.





I twisted the paper bag strips to make the branches tall. My tree is a tall tree.

I also used colour paper to make the leaves of the tree. I tore orange and yellow colour paper to make the leaves.

First, I cut strips from the brown paper. It was a smooth paper. I made it rough when I twisted the strips together.



7. Finally, the children's trees were arranged to form a class "forest" sculpture. The children then participated in a gallery walk around their class "forest". The gallery walk provided opportunities for the children to talk about their friends' artwork and reinforce their understanding of the different basic elements of art. The children made observations such as how their friends' trees were different from their own. Some were taller than others. The children also noted the different colours of the leaves on the trees as well as the size and shapes. The children expressed that they loved how the class "forest" looked.



Conclusion

The activity provided opportunities for children to relate what they have learnt about the basic elements of art to the features of plants they observed in the garden. By making use of their observations and their knowledge about the elements of art, the children were able to explore using different paper materials to create their "tree" artwork to form a class "forest".

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