

Hammered Flower Art and Card Making

Creativity applied to anxiety (Activity 6/12)

DESCRIPTION

Flower art and working with nature is a very therapeutic activity as is the rhythm and sense of release that can come from banging the rubber hammer. Card Making is a wonderful activity with great end results. In this activity, you blend nature and art together and can make cards with the end results. You use a rubber hammer and some flowers and/or leaves and you hammer them to release the pattern and colors onto a piece of paper. Then these can be turned into cards that can be given to people for various occasions or even sold in the reception area and the money that it generates can be used to buy more materials for card making and flower art.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ease anxiety by creating a connection with nature and by creating beautiful cards that be shared with loved ones or sold.
2. To enjoy the hammering and the sensory and therapeutic side of that activity.
3. To help with dexterity, holding the hammer, banging the hammer.
4. To feel a sense of wonder in the patterns nature releases.
5. To feel a sense of pride in one's creations.
6. To enjoy it as a social or individual activity.

RESOURCES AND MATERIALS

1. Flowers or leaves to print (can be taken from the garden, a walk prior to the activity can make this into a whole nature bathing experience)
2. Watercolour paper or other rough acid-free paper
3. Rubber hammer or mallet
4. Blank Cards
5. Scissors
6. Paper towels
7. A pen
8. Greeting stickers (Happy Birthday, Get well soon, Congratulations, etc. Sheets of these can be bought and kept in a folder, and can turn each piece of art into a greeting card.
9. Double-sided stickers to stick print onto blank cards
10. Hard surface for working on.

IMPLEMENTATION - INSTRUCTION

1. Gather your materials.
2. Prepare your workspace. You want a smooth, hard surface that you can hammer and not worry about denting or getting messy. Plastic cutting boards with paper bags over them can be a good idea for protecting the surface or table beneath.
3. Trim chunky or squishy bits off your flowers or leaves.
4. Arrange them on your watercolor paper.
5. Cover them with 2-3 layers of paper towels (they absorb excess liquids from plants).
6. On your paper towels, draw the borders of the area you will need to hammer with a pen so that you know to hammer within these borders.

When you are all set up, begin your Flower Art Hammering

7. Start by making small taps. This will set the flowers or leaves in place.
8. Then find your own rhythm, maybe going in rows up and down, or left to right. You want to hammer every bit of the flowers or leaves below, so there is no rush. Be patient. Enjoy!

The Unveiling

9. Peel back the paper towel to check your progress. If the pattern on the paper towel is filled in, then you are probably done. If not, replace the paper towel and keep going.
10. Then peel away the flowers or leaves to reveal your print. If it sticks to the paper just let it dry for a little bit and then you will be able to brush it off.
11. Add your print to blank cards to make them into greeting cards or enjoy them as a print itself.
12. If you are turning them into cards, when dry, use double-sided sticky stickers to attach your print to a blank card, and add a sticker greeting to turn it into a card.

POSSIBLE MODIFICATIONS

1. If this activity becomes popular. Try different hammers for different effects.
2. Try different types of leaves and flowers. Encourage experimentation and curiosity with the different flowers and leaves. What works? What doesn't work? This connection with nature is extremely beneficial.
3. Some people might enjoy different parts, the choosing the flowers, the setting up, the hammering, the end result, the card making, the sticking the stickers, find a way that everyone can have a part, for example, those who might enjoy choosing the flowers and hammering, that could be 2 activities, and the middle part, arranging and setting up, could be done by you, or someone who enjoys that part, and then it's given to the person who enjoys only the hammering part. There are many ways that this activity can be modified.

EXPECTED RESULTS

We expect to see a decrease in the person's anxiety by engaging with nature in the choosing part and throughout the activity. We expect the person to enjoy the social side of it or to enjoy it as an individual activity that they can immerse themselves into. We expect to see the person tap into their creativity. We expect a sense of enjoyment whilst doing the activity and a sense of pride with the end result. We expect the hammering part to be therapeutic and calming for the person involved.