

The **ART** of Recycling

Audrey Crosby

Wait! Stop! Before you throw away another shoebox, try this great art project. I introduced this unit on additive sculpting to my high school students as a way of integrating recycling into our curriculum.

I opened this lesson by asking the question, "Why is it beneficial to find more than one use for something?" After having a group discussion, I challenged the class to create expressive busts out of papier-mâché using a shoebox as the base.

Creating the Structure

Students were required to bring in their own shoeboxes. First, they used masking tape to seal the lids to the shoeboxes. Next, they made cylinders out of 4 x 6" (10 x 15 cm) strips of poster board that were rolled and stapled. These cylinders were taped to the top and center of their shoebox to serve as a neck.

I demonstrated how to make the head for their busts. They were instructed to wad up approximately three or four individual sheets of open newspaper. These wads were then placed in the center of one open sheet of newspaper and wrapped. Then the folded edges were taped, to create an oval form. This section was then secured to the cylinder with tape.

Adding Papier-Mâché

Once the initial structure was completed, it was time to have students papier-mâché their busts. First, they

were instructed to apply two layers of strips that had been dipped into the prepared wheat paste mixture.

After these layers were dry, students began forming features such as the nose, mouth, ears, eyebrows, etc. using papier-mâché strips. Students layered and smoothed flat strips on top of added features to secure them in place.

Finishing the Busts

Students added color to the busts using tempera paint. After painting the face and neck, students added details such as eyelashes, eye color, lip color, etc. Bright colors were used to paint the base of the bust. Finally, students used low-temperature glue

guns to attach yarn for the hair (some students opted to use artificial hairpieces). Of course,

the hair could also be painted. A final coat of tempera varnish sealed the artworks.

Final Note

This project would be a great way to integrate history and literature into art class. Students could create well-known historical figures or characters from literary classics, and then attach a brief write-up about that figure.

I displayed the student works in our school media center and the

staff and student body loved them. My students said this was one of their favorite projects they'd done thus far.



Audrey Crosby is an art teacher at T. W. Josey High School in Augusta, Georgia. crosbya@rcboe.org

NATIONAL STANDARD

Students apply media, techniques, and processes with sufficient skill, confidence, and sensitivity that their intentions are carried out in their artworks.

WEB LINK

www.metmuseum.org/TOAH/HD/ropo/hd_ropo.htm

Why is it beneficial to find more than one use for something?

Lawanda Hobbs, grade eleven.

