

Making Paper Mache Projects

**You can choose to follow the instructions on how to make paper mache bowls by referring to your FOSS activity book. If you want to be more adventurous, your class could also try making paper mache masks or ornaments. This may be a project you will want to collaborate on with your building art teacher, depending on how “crafty” you feel.*

(Hint – It is also helpful to have extra volunteers in the classroom for this project, or divide the class into small groups, and work with one group each day during “choice time/station work.” This project will take a few days/a week to complete.)

Purpose: To provide children with a better understanding of how paper can be used for a purpose other than for writing or drawing, and to reinforce what they have just learned about the art of making paper mache in the Philippines.

Kindergarten Standards:

Power NYSCCLS ELA Standards (ICSD) - Responding to Literature:

11. Create and/or present a poem, dramatization, artwork, or personal response to a particular author or theme studied in class, with support as needed.

Materials Needed:

- Balloons for each child (large if making masks, small if making ornaments)
- Flour and warm water for making paste. (Typically you add one part flour to two parts water and stir until there are no lumps. The paste can be covered and stored in the refrigerator for a couple of days.)
- Strips of newspaper (You can also use scraps of tissue paper, paper bags, paper towels, old sheets, etc.)
- Large or small yogurt cups (one for each child)
- Masking tape
- Full sheets of newspaper for covering tables (You can wash the flour paste, but it becomes very hard to clean when dry.)
- Paper mache photo card

Set Up:

- Tape the base of the yogurt cup to the worktable. Place one inflated balloon (tie side down) into the cup, and tape it in place. (If you are making an ornament, you should tape a piece of yarn around the top of the balloon with the ends hanging down into the cup, so you will have a way to hang it when it is finished.)
- Cover the remainder of the table with newspaper (to make for an easier clean up).

- Have precut paper scraps available in the center of the table. **You can also set up a "cutting station" a few days before you begin the project to give kids some extra practice cutting straight lines with scissors.*
- Have paste poured into containers and on the table. (Old aluminum pie plates or deep Styrofoam trays work well for this.)

Guided Instruction:

TEACHER: (Hold up paper mache photo card.) *Today, we are going to make our own paper mache projects. Since it is difficult for us to carve into wood, and make a takan like the people in Paete, Philippines, we are going to make our paper mache molds using balloons. Once our paper mache projects have dried and hardened, we will be able to pop the balloons, and make the inside hollow.*

- Direct children to the balloons at their workspace. Explain that the yogurt cups should stay taped to the table while they are working.
- Demonstrate how to dip a strip of the newspaper into the flour paste. Be sure it is completely covered.
- Have the children use their fingers like scissors, and slide the strip through them to get rid of the extra paste.
- Smooth the strips onto the top of the balloon and extend them down the side. Continue with this process (from all angles) until the whole balloon is well covered with multiple overlapping layers of paper and paste. You can turn the balloon in the cup as needed. ***Do not*** paste over the strings of your ornament. (If you are making masks, only extended the paper mache approximately half way down the body of the balloon.)
- Let it dry. (It may take a day or two before you are ready for the next step.)
- When the first layer has dried completely, you can choose to do a second layer of paper mache, depending on how strong you want to make it. This is also a good time to attach additional features if you are making a mask. You can choose to tape pieces of cardboard, paper egg cartons, buttons, etc. before adding a second layer of paper mache over the top.
- Let it dry again. **Be sure to let your project dry completely, or you may have mold problems later on.*
- When the project has dried, pop the balloon, and remove the mask/ornament from the yogurt cup. You may want to trim the edges on the mask to make it more even.
- Now you are ready to paint.
- As soon as the paint is dry, you can have fun decorating by gluing on sequins, yarn, lace, beads, bottle caps, corks, etc. **While the masks are intended more for decorative purposes, you can cut eyeholes out before you paint them. If the children wish to wear the masks, you can also punch holes on either side to add ribbon or elastic to fit around their heads.*

Enjoy your beautiful artwork!