



ARTS, MUSIC, LITERATURE

TITLE: Popcorn Seed Mosaics

SUBJECT: Art

GRADE LEVEL: K-3; may be suitable for older students if lesson on mosaic art is included

MATERIAL(S) (option 1): Popcorn kernels, tempera paint (multiple colors), inexpensive paint brush, shallow container, thick paper (poster board), glue, pencils, wax paper

MATERIAL(S) (option 2): Rubbing alcohol, food coloring. You can color the unpopped kernels using alcohol and food coloring. Leave the kernels in the alcohol mixture longer for a deeper color

OBJECTIVE(S): To create a picture using painted popcorn kernels

OVERVIEW:

Mosaics are made of tiny colored pieces of stone, pottery, glass or other materials, arranged together and set in plaster or cement to make patterns and images. They can be used to decorate a floor, a wall or in some cases a ceiling. Mosaics have a long history. They were created in Ancient times in Babylon, Egypt, Greece and Rome. When the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum (which were buried under lava when Mount Vesuvius erupted in A.D.79) were rediscovered, many wonderful mosaics were found. Ask your students to imagine, making a mosaic using over one million pieces of glass - all hand cut, and placed into wet plaster to create a large pattern for their entry hall! It is a project that would take months and in some cases even many years to complete.

For several centuries, interest in the making of mosaics declined. It wasn't until the 19th century, when architects started to look at old ideas for new inspirations, that the interest once again returned and mosaics began popping up in public buildings and private homes.

1. Put seeds in a shallow container (can use paper cup); mix tempera paint with the seeds until seeds are covered. Repeat for additional colors.
2. Spread the seeds out on wax paper and allow to dry (at least 1 hour, or overnight).
3. In the meantime, students can draw a picture on their poster paper. Some ideas include masks, fish or designs. NOTE: Teacher may substitute with outlined pattern or other outlined images xeroxed onto paper. Students will be "coloring in" with seeds and should use a dark color for the outline.
4. When the seeds are dry, they can be arranged and glued onto the poster paper in the appropriate areas.