

TISSUE PAPER WATERCOLOR

AGES

Teens/tweens

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Participants use tissue paper to create watercolor backgrounds and place an ocean-themed silhouette on top. Easily modified to fit any ocean theme. This craft requires drying time, so be sure to plan a filler activity. Suggested runtime: 60–90 min.

MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

Materials: Stretched canvas; ocean animal silhouettes; bleeding tissue paper in blues, greens, yellows and purples (bleeding tissue paper is essential—regular tissue paper won't work); foam brushes; black permanent markers, paint pens or paint (or black paper cutouts); water; small cup or bowl for each person; pencils; plastic to cover the work surfaces; transfer paper; plastic gloves (optional, tissue paper will stain hands).

Preparation: Gather materials and, for younger children, cut out the silhouettes ahead of time. Cover work tables with plastic because the tissue paper will stain surfaces. Older children can experiment with more complex color mixing and cut out more complex animal silhouettes.

Instructions for the watercolor layer:

- Tear several colors of tissue paper into small irregular shapes. All the shapes and sizes should be different.
- Fill a small cup with water. Use the foam brush to spread water on the canvas.
- Place the tissue paper on the wet canvas. You can place the pieces in a random manner or in an ombre pattern (light color to dark color).
- Let the tissue paper dry (approx 30 min).

Filler activity ideas for drying time:

- Watching a video from underwater webcams
- Reading books about the ocean
- Moving station-to-station to learn about sea animals
- Set up a place for kids to watch a shadow puppet show or provide ocean animal cutouts to create their own shadow puppet show.

TIP:

See under Resources in the Ocean Animals program on page 243 for silhouettes.

CRAFT | LOW COST

- Have a collection of plastic ocean animal toys or fish tank decorations (as background/setting items) that kids could set in front of lights (or use shadows from the sun outside); then tape paper to the wall (or sidewalk) for kids to trace the silhouettes.

Instructions for finishing:

- Remove the tissue paper from the canvas (if the paper is still wet it can stain your fingers or other surfaces)
- Use transfer paper to transfer the outline of your silhouette onto the canvas, or trace the shape onto the background. Alternatively, you can cut out and glue black silhouettes onto your canvas.
- Use a black permanent marker, paint pen or paint to color in the silhouette. Draw the outline first by going over the faint pencil line with your marker.
- Take care not to get marker on your hand which may smudge the canvas. After drawing the outline, color the interior of the image. You will have the best results if you color using the side of the marker tip. You may have to color several times to get a nice solid black covering.

UNIQUE SPACE AND/OR PERSONNEL NEEDS

Solo-librarian friendly.

RESOURCES

Web

Ocean Voyager Webcam from Georgia Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/3fpy6LG>

Indo-Pacific Barrier Reef Webcam from Georgia Aquarium:
<https://bit.ly/2SvQx8A>

Open Sea Cam from Monterey Bay Aquarium (there is a live narrated feeding every weekday at 11 a.m. PDT on this cam) : <https://bit.ly/3hX7y6g>

Live streams from The National Aquarium:
<https://aqua.org/explore/livestreams>

Other aquariums with live cams:

- Secret Reef from Tennessee Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/3oXNJ0b>
- Penguin Rock from Tennessee Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/2QWBswm>
- River Otter Falls from Tennessee Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/2Su3wHU>
- Aquarium of the Pacific: <https://bit.ly/2TrM5s9>
- Beluga Whales from Georgia Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/2SsSjY5>
- Seattle Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/2R3hWys>
- Sea Otters from Vancouver Aquarium: <https://bit.ly/3ft862k>

Books

Non-fiction

The Brilliant Deep: Rebuilding the World's Coral Reefs (2018) by Kate Messner (children's)

The Ocean (2020) by Miranda Krestovnikof (children's)

Kid Artists: True Tales of Childhood from Creative Legends (2016) by David Stabler and Doogie Horner (children's)

Fiction

I'm the Best Artist in the Ocean (2008) by Kevin Sherry (children's)

The Dot (2003) by Peter H. Reynolds (children's)

Drawn Together (2018) by Minh Lê and Dan Santat (children's)