

Fabric Forming

This is an easy and exciting method of making 3-dimensional objects with an emphasis on building up surface texture.

Materials

Objects to form round e.g. plastic bottles & cardboard tubes

Cling film

Fabric torn into strips (avoid thick fabrics)

PVA glue

Water

Container for glue mixture

Yarn (interesting textures work well)

Brusho® powder

Covering for tables.



Method

- Prepare the forms by wrapping thoroughly in cling film.
- Mix PVA glue with water approximately 1 part PVA to 2 parts water. Cheaper glues need less water.
- Cut or tear fabric into strips approximately 3cm wide. Avoid making them too long as they get tangled easily. Put fabric strips into the diluted PVA.
- Show the children how to squeeze the excess liquid from the fabric strips then wrap them around the form. Make sure they wrap so that the form can be taken out when dry i.e. avoid making the opening narrower than the body of the form.
- Encourage the children to make interesting textures by twisting and wrapping to create textures, ridges and ripples in the fabric.
- Gaps can be left in the wrapping as long as they aren't too big.
- Interesting shapes and textures can be made by alternating layers of fabric strips with pieces of textured yarn.
- When an interesting textured surface has been achieved sprinkle tiny amounts of dry Brusho® powder onto the wet fabric surface then leave the whole piece to dry. The dry powder will spread gradually on the wet fabric to make interesting colour patterning.
- Make sure the form is left on a polythene bag or ceramic tile so that it will come off easily when dry. Remove the form when completely dry and peel away the cling film.

Taking it Further

Work collaboratively on an oversized form to create a group piece. Glue several separate forms together to make an abstract sculpture, supporting the sections until dry.

Simple materials are used here to enable experiments in texture and form. Fabric strips and glue are inexpensive yet can open up a line of enquiry that children may wish to follow for some time.