

Nurture Nature - Week 2

Experimenting with collage



This image is from an exhibition that Mark Hearld had at The Scottish Gallery in Edinburgh last year, because of lockdown the exhibition had to be a virtual one. I think it's a great picture to inspire our collage experiments this week.

This week you will need

Sketchbook

Collage papers, there are some in your kit but also try and collect some of your own such as Wrapping paper, magazine pages, tickets, till receipts, paper bags, wallpaper, food wrappers

Scissors

Glue stick

PVA glue

Water colour paints

Paint brush

Clean scrap paper to lean on for gluing

Maybe your pencil, sharpener, eraser

Newspaper or something to cover your work surface

Our theme throughout this project is our local nature, plants, birds, animals, weather, insects, rivers, fish, frogs, there's so much to discover out there!

We will try out a few different techniques over the next couple of weeks before we start to put together our mixed media collage. This will help you to understand the techniques and how they work and give you confidence when you combine them later into a collage picture.

Before you start your collage try to get active and go out for a walk, it can be as long or as short as you like. You could just walk around your garden, or a local park, you might want to explore the peaks and see what you find or just take notice on your way to the shop, there are birds everywhere and plants growing between the cracks in the pavements.

If you can't get out, look through the window or watch natural history programs on TV, order books from the library or look in magazines and newspapers or try google or youtube for inspiration and information.

Wherever you decide to go enjoy your walk and notice what you see, you might want to take photos or make some drawings or notes to help you remember.

Use what you find to inspire your collage experiments.

Before trying to plan anything grab your scissors and some scrap paper and have a play, don't think too much about what you are doing just enjoy the process of cutting paper, move the paper around as it slides through the scissors and see what shapes you come up with.

Now try tearing, paper will tear differently in different directions, one way quite smooth lines and in the other direction it will keep tearing off in little bits. If you want a specific shape work slowly and use your thumbs to direct the tear, or just keep ripping that paper and see what you get.

Try to cut and tear your shapes without drawing an outline first, use the scissors or your fingers as your pencil, the more you try the easier it will get.

Now start sticking some bits into your sketchbook. Your glue stick will be the best for this. Usually the best way is to spread a thin layer of glue onto the back of your shape, have a piece of clean paper to lean on for spreading the glue otherwise your picture will get very messy.

Except for tissue paper, this is very thin and delicate so when gluing tissue down it's best to spread your glue onto your background and place the tissue on top.

If you want to add paint to your collage make sure the glue is dry first and always leave each layer of paint to dry before adding the next.

You could always make some collage papers of your own using the wax resist technique we learnt last week.

Sample and experiment, make notes about what you have done, consider what you like and might use later. You don't have to like everything, you may find something you never want to try again and that's fine, it's just something else you've learnt.

Think about the background as well. Mark Hearld's Menagerie (on page 1) has a dark background, you could try this, if you don't have dark paper you can paint some. You could also try a patterned background or work on newspaper.

If you prefer to experiment by making an actual picture that's fine too.

Have a close look at 'Menagerie' and the fox and pigeons by Mark Hearld on the introduction sheets, there are plenty of ideas and techniques to inspire you.

In this picture below Mark Hearld is cutting out a little bird (I think it might be a snipe?) made from his hand painted papers.

Most importantly have fun with collage!



On page 4 is a page from my sketchbook that I made to try out different techniques. The colours and images are inspired by what I saw when I went for a walk with Travis, my dog. We walked over the hills behind my house. The sky was blue and cloudy, I saw birds and leaves blowing around in the wind and windows glowing golden with the low sun shining on them across the valley.

It is not a realistic picture of my walk, it's all about playing with paper but it still reminds me of my walk because I had it in my mind while I was working. I have made notes on the picture to give you some ideas.

