

Rock Painting

What you need

Plastic tablecloths (cover both the table(s) and the floor under the tables)

Plastic produce bags (Cheap gloves)

Paper towels

Plastic containers with covers (Glad or Ziplock) medium and larger

1 inch paint brushes (Cheap bristle kind)

Aluminum pans (disposable)

A selection of acrylic craft paints (Cheap again)

“Rocks”

The set up

1. Spread your floor covering first. (I normally use a plastic backed absorbent drop cloth)
2. Set your table(s) on top of the ground cover so that there is a good overlap and the ground cover will capture the spills and leaks
3. set out your aluminum pans on the tables to hold the plastic paint containers, (this is a first line a defense against really enthusiastic kids)
4. Put a box or containers of the produce bags (separated) on one end of the table.
5. Put a box for “rocks” next to the produce bags
6. Put a container for paint brushes next to the rocks
7. At the far end of the table put another container for “used” brushes
8. Somewhere near the end of the table (end of project end) put a plastic garbage can.
9. Put on some really grubby clothes that you do not care about or a very complete covering shop apron. (For shows, I wear my leather shop apron)

Final steps

1. In each of the containers you have set out for paint (I normally have 10 or 12) squeeze a few good sized drops of acrylic paint of your selected colors. (I normally have a “brown” color line and a “gray” color line.
2. To each paint container add enough water to fill the container $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
3. Using one of the brushes, stir the paint mix in each container. What you are making is a water based acrylic stain.
4. Make sure that you have color variation along the line.

How it works

1. Participant first takes a produce bag and puts it on the hand that they do not paint with (left for right handers, etc)
2. Next they select a rock and place it in the bagged hand ready to paint.
3. Then they pick up a brush. (This only takes one brush per individual because the stains do not have sufficient pigment to carry over)
4. They move down the line applying stain to the rock until they are satisfied. The best results come from blotching color on rather than painting the entire rock with any one color. The stains will flow together and blend.
5. When finished with the rock, pull the bag back around off the holding hand and around the rock and tie a knot. Make sure the parent knows to untie the bag and to let the rock dry in open air when they get home.
6. For parents not interested in being the proud owner of a rock, the garbage can serves.
7. My practice has been, for any kid old enough to see over the top of the table and slop paint on the rock- parental assistance is not allowed. If the parents insist, give them a rock of their own to play with. I always enjoy the end result when the 4 year old turns out a rock that really looks like a rock while mom or dad turn out a piece of plaster with paint all over it.

HAVE A BALL