





Paper Mache’ Birds by Karen Wolfe

- Students were assigned a bird in the 1st grade classroom, they drew it accurately with multiple drafts for their Expeditionary Learning process.
- In art we used measurement to build the bird accurately. Students used a rubber band to make the measurement of the birds (ex. 3 ½ inches) **Note:** As you know 1st graders likely have not used a ruler in Math so this was a first for many of them - I taught them the basics of “reading” a ruler like start at 1 not 12, the rubber band placement made it simple to check for accuracy as we worked on making the simple oval body and round heads from newspaper/wooden beads.
- We PM the head, body and cardboard beak. We used “Copier Paper” in realistic colors - Construction Paper DOES NOT WORK. I never paint PM sculptures.
- Cardboard tail & wings are drawn, cut out & PM **Tip:** use styrofoam food trays for drying the PM parts - the PM items don’t stick & label the tray.
- I used hot glue to attach wings and tail - we also sometimes PM where the tail is attached for better strength.
- Originally we were making just the male bird but adding the female was so good as it repeated the process - applying the learning from the male. We used compare & contrast of the male (size) to create the female, color change in the PM for many birds as well.
- TREES, My husband created the trees. We had two winter storms (MAINE) with trees being heavily damaged. The “tree” is Poplar, the circle base is White Birch. Which were simply screwed together.
- Legs: Students used paper tape to mark where they wanted their birds. Again my husband cut coat hangers into leg sizes, drilled the tree branch for the legs. These were not glued in the tree, just placed. I then hot glued the birds onto the legs with students, by piercing.....I didn’t glue the legs into the tree but maybe should have... I encouraged the parents to do it.
- I have 40 minute classes and this took 10 weeks, basically the third Trimester.