



**CLASS**  
Community Liaison for  
Art in Stanislaus Schools

**Central California  
Art Association**

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#### Required Materials:

1 pkg model magic clay  
(1/4 pkg of each color:  
red, blue, yellow, white)  
small paper plates  
large plastic bag to store  
leftovers

#### Resources:

examples of 3D  
sculpture  
Example of art by  
Courtney Mattison



#### Vocabulary:

3-dimensional  
2-dimensional  
sculpture  
advocacy / activism

#### Prior Knowledge:

Reef biome or  
information about  
the ocean and its  
inhabitants

## Unit/Topic: 3D Projects

### Lesson Title: Model Magic Coral Reef

**Learning Objective:** Students will understand how to form a 3 dimensional sculpture with texture, using model magic. They will practice color mixing with primary colors.

Number of Sessions: 1      Grade(s): 3-4

### Process

**Preparation:** Packages of model magic can be cut in quarters with scissors to distribute. If you cut ahead of time, keep the wrappers on or they'll get mashed into a big mess. Keep tightly sealed in a plastic bag.

**Warm Up/Introduction:** Share the art of Courtney Mattison, ceramic sculptor. Discuss how art can help us understand the world around us, and move to protect what we know (activism / advocacy). Talk about coral bleaching and/or ocean advocacy if you feel inclined.

Review that 2-dimensional means flat, front and back. Introduce the term 3-dimensional... meaning an object that you can look at from all sides -- front, back, top, bottom, side. We see objects in 3-dimensions. We also call this sculpture.

**Process:** Show images of different types of coral reef life: corals, sponge, anemones, gastropods (snails), kelp, sea stars, bi-valves (clams, oysters), sand dollars, fish, worms, etc. "Finding Nemo" movie is a good reference they have probably seen.

#### Demonstrate:

- take two quarters, and mix them to show how to mix the colors if they want.
- create a "pancake" base for the reef to sit on
- using additional colors, build up the reef in layers with a variety of animals and plants
- add texture using a pencil or other "tools"

Show, then have students use model magic to create their own reef. Please limit to ONE package – 1/4 pkg of each color. Colors can be mixed. Students can use pencils or other tools to create texture in the clay. Have them place their work on a small paper plate to store and dry.

**Close/Evaluation:** To wrap up the lesson, have students share what they made... gallery walk, or back on the carpet, depending on time.

**TIP:** Pick up leftovers - don't leave with students. You can hand out leftover clay, or mixed up colors to ongoing classes.



### Visual Art Standards:

3.VA:Cr1.2

Apply knowledge of available resources, tools, and technologies to investigate personal ideas through the art-making process.

4.VA:Cr2.3

Document, describe, and represent regional constructed environments.

3.VA:Re7.2

Determine messages communicated by an image.

### NGSS Science tie-in

Biomes

Environmental  
Conservation

### LS2.C: Ecosystem Dynamics, Functioning, and Resilience

When the environment changes in ways that affect a place's physical characteristics, temperature, or availability of resources, some organisms survive and reproduce, others move to new locations, yet others move into the transformed environment, and some die. (secondary to 3-LS4-4)

### LS1.A: Structure and Function

Plants and animals have both internal and external structures that serve various functions in growth, survival, behavior, and reproduction. (4-LS1-1)