

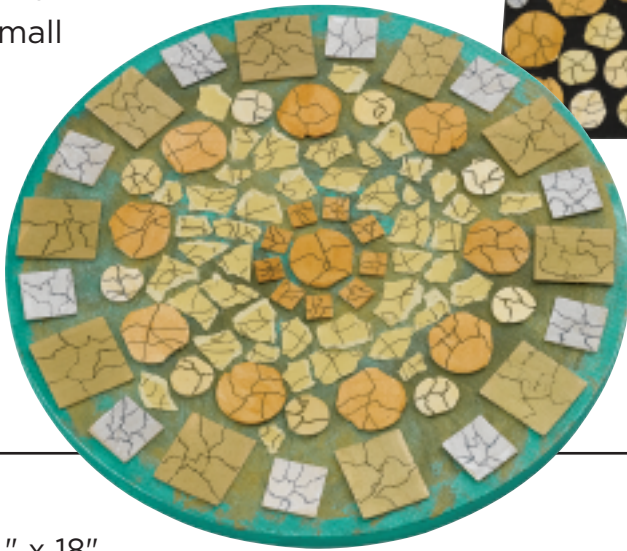
“Ostrich Eggshell” Mosaics

(art + science; art + social studies)

In Namibia, ostrich eggshells are used in many contemporary art forms. Whole eggs are assembled for lamps and other decorative items. The shards of broken egg shells are turned into beautiful mosaics. Combined with native copper and silver inlay, they enhance tabletops and large plates and are extremely popular with visitors.

An ostrich egg is “huge” compared to a chicken egg. It weighs about three pounds and is equal in size to 18 to 24 chicken eggs. The shell is very hard and thick. A small hammer is needed to break it. The broken shards can be cut and sanded into small shapes. The surface of the egg can easily be painted as desired for design purposes.

This lesson plan uses small pieces of wood and cardstock to closely resemble the thick shell pieces of this Namibian art form.



Grade Levels K-12

Note: instructions and materials based on a class of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Materials

Blick® Canvas Panel 14" x 18" (07008-1418), one per student

Blickrylic™ Student Acrylics Mars Black (00711-2047), share one quart across class

Blick® Scholastic White Bristle Gesso Brush, 1-1/2" (05156-5112), share six brushes across class

Woodsies™ Wood Shapes Circles (60408-0000) and **Squares** (60408-0600), need one 130-piece package per student

Snippy Scissors, pointed (57040-2009), 12-piece package, need one pair per student

Blick® Liquid Watercolor, Gold (00369-9015), Silver (00369-9335), Copper (00369-9505) Pearl (00369-1095) one 8-oz bottle each to share across class

Dynasty® Fine Sapphire Synthetic Flat Brushes, (06003-0729), share one 72-piece set across class

Sharpie® Ultra Fine Point Marker, Black (21315-2003), one per student

Blick® Construction Card, 18" x 24" Gold (11408-4079) and **Silver** (11408-2599), share four sheets across class

General's™ Pastel Chalk Pencils set of eight neutral colors (20533-3009), need two sets to share across class

Elmer's® Glue-All (23810-1005) share one 7-5/8-oz bottle between two students

Box of zip-close bags, sandwich-size, three per student

Process

1. Paint canvas panel with black acrylic. Use the wide gesso brush, applying the paint in even strokes. Set aside to dry. The canvas panel will serve as the background for this project.
2. Ostrich eggshells are similar in thickness to the Woodsies™ chosen for this project. Woodsies™ are packaged in an assortment of three sizes. Sort Woodsies™ into sizes and shapes. Round Woodsies™ may be trimmed with scissors to create irregular edges to more realistically mimic the natural shape of the egg pieces. Do not trim the edges of the square woodsies as they may split.
3. Paint the Woodsies™ with Liquid Watercolor. Shake well before applying. Paint each different size of shard with a different color. For example: all large circles gold, medium circles silver and small circles copper. Paint one side only. The watercolor is transparent and when used on the wood gives it a light transparent texture. Silver and pearl may be combined for a deeper silver effect. Allow to dry.
4. Using a Sharpie®, draw vein-like lines on the painted side of the Woodsies™. These lines will resemble cracks in the egg shards. Draw the lines close together, twisting the marker as the lines are drawn to make a more natural crack line.
5. Cut the gold and silver construction card into 6" x 9" pieces. Distribute one piece of each color per student. This thick paper is metallic on both sides and has a matching core. Repeat the Sharpie technique to draw crack lines on one side of both pieces. Tear the paper into irregular pieces 1" or smaller.
6. Using a light-colored pastel pencil, lightly sketch several 6-8" geometric shapes on the panel. Experiment with the placement of the wood ostrich egg shards within these areas. Keep the shards close together but not touching. When pleased, glue in place. Apply the glue as closely to the edge as possible. To ensure the pieces are glued solidly, you may need to apply pressure several times.
7. Fill in the negative (or open) spaces of the design with the paper shards. Glue edges as flat as possible.

Options

- Replace black background with color such as Sargent® Metallic Acrylic, 4-oz jar, Green (00730-7014), or 8-oz bottle Antique Gold (00730-9135).
- Use a Fredrix® Round Pre-Stretched Canvas, 12" (07111-1012).
- This process can be used on flat surfaces of furniture, book covers or any areas that will accept the wood pieces. This technique requires a varnish.

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National Standards

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes

K-4 Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

5-8 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

9-12 Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use

Content Standard #4 — Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

K-4 Students identify specific works of art as belonging to particular cultures, times, and places

5-8 Students know and compare the characteristics of artworks in various eras and cultures

9-12 Students describe the function and explore the meaning of specific art objects within varied cultures, times, and places

Content Standard #6 — Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

K-4 Students identify connections between the visual arts and other disciplines in the curriculum

5-8 Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are interrelated with the visual arts

9-12 Students compare characteristics of visual arts within a particular historical period or style with ideas, issues, or themes in the humanities or sciences