

camorama

In this activity students will build a camouflage diorama to illustrate the ways birds use camoflace to protect/hide their eggs. Students will make paper-mache eggs, and paint them a variety of colors, and place them against a variety of backgrounds to illustrate how the markings fool the eye, and make the egg hard to see.

Materials

chicken wire, in about 6' squares
paper-mache craft materials, or newsprint and glue
(glue can be made of flour and water)
paints of various colors, and brushes
collected rocks and stones
dirt
dried grass
box for diorama (shoebox is a good size)

Step One Make eggs out of paper mache.

Make glue by mixing flour and water to a runny paste (the thickness of cream). Make the form of your egg by shaping the chicken wire into an egg shape. On top of this you will apply layers of paper mache. Craft stores sell kits, or you can use newsprint and glue: Tear the newsprint into strips, and coat with glue, and wrap it around the chicken wire, smoothing out any wrinkles. Apply layers until your egg is stiff and strong, then let dry.

Step Two Build a diorama.

Create an environment in your shoebox that might be like one in the wild. Put in rocks, grasses, anything you like, to make a place where your egg will be hidden.

Step Three Camouflage your egg.

Consult the resources listed on this web page, and use different colors and markings to make your egg hard to see against the background of your diorama. When the whole class is done, you can put your eggs in each others' dioramas and observe that what works in one place may not work at all in another.