

Animal Sculpture

Teacher Resource



About this resource

Animal sculpture is a great way of encouraging young people to learn about different animals and identify with the needs and interactions between species. The materials used are available from everyday and recycled sources.

Three-dimensional work can be complex for young people but this approach allows the work to be made in stages with plenty of opportunity for altering, additions and troubleshooting.



How to use this resource

This Animal Sculpture Resource is designed to be used for a school project and has been created by BALTIC Freelance Artist Natalie Frost.

Natalie has made both written activities and a film demonstrating each activity in the same order. Teachers can watch the film and read the resource as an individual and deliver the activities back in class, or watch alongside pupils as the film provides opportunities to pause, think, make and reflect.

Watch the film here: [BALTIC Stars Online | Animal Heads with artist Natalie Frost.](#)



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About the artist

Natalie Frost's studio practice is concerned with profiling natural aesthetics and processes. Combining simple geometric collage, paper folding and packaging design, Natalie designs structures and compositions which highlight colour, tone, structure or performance in nature. Using complimentary, man-made materials, Natalie creates affinity between the natural and manufactured.

Having worked for many years as an art and media teacher in a specialist setting, Natalie continues to work creatively with learning disabled people and those on the Autistic spectrum. Natalie also consults and freelances running arts projects in schools for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.



What you will need for this resource

- Junk items
- Thick card or mount board
- Cardboard
- PVA Glue
- Pots, bottles and/or tubes
- Multi-coloured tissue paper sheets
- Stapler
- Newspaper or newsprint sheet
- Masking tape
- Gummed paper tape
- A shredder or coloured paper thinly cut into strips
- Paint brushes and paint pots
- Picture hanging kit (optional)



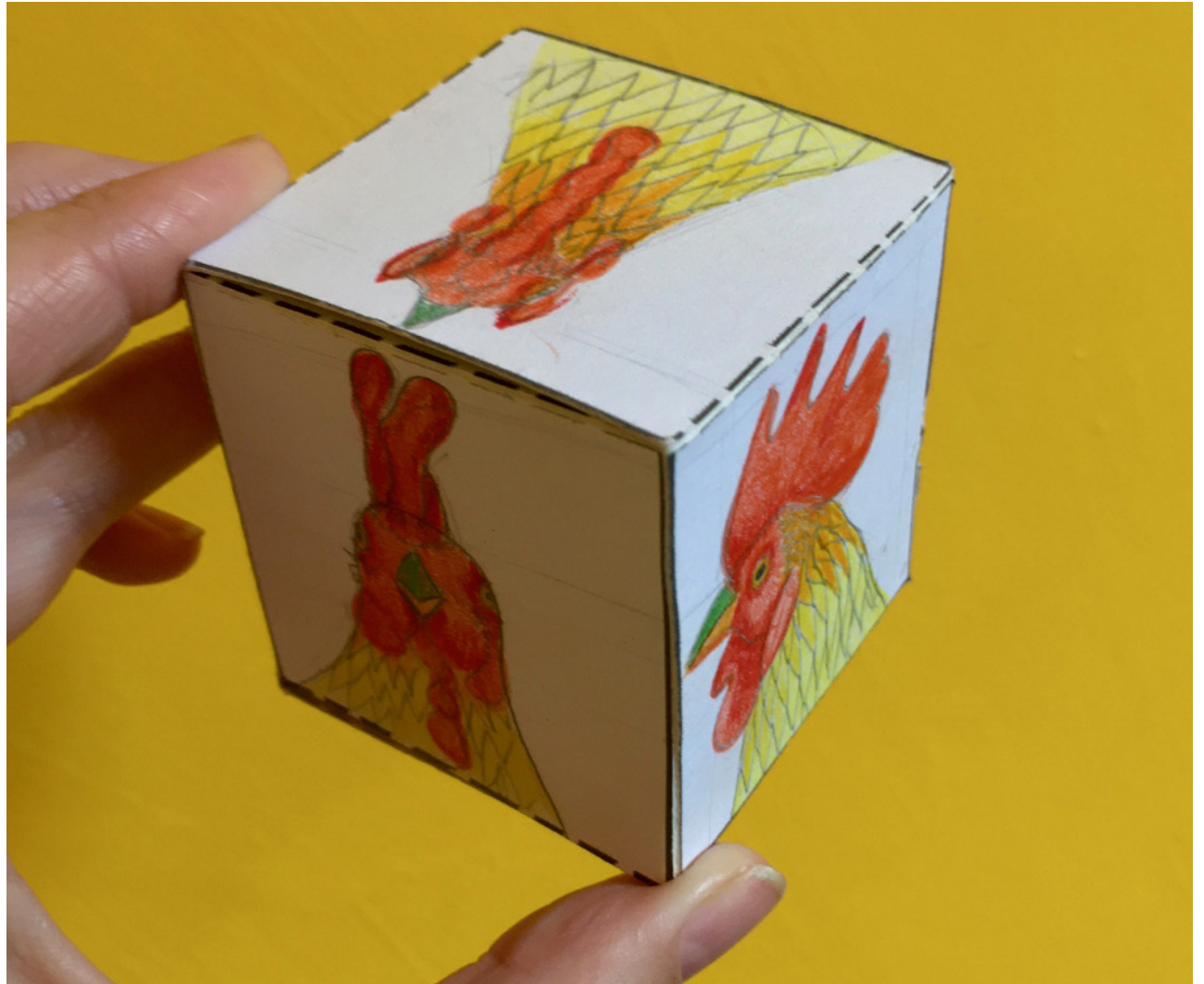
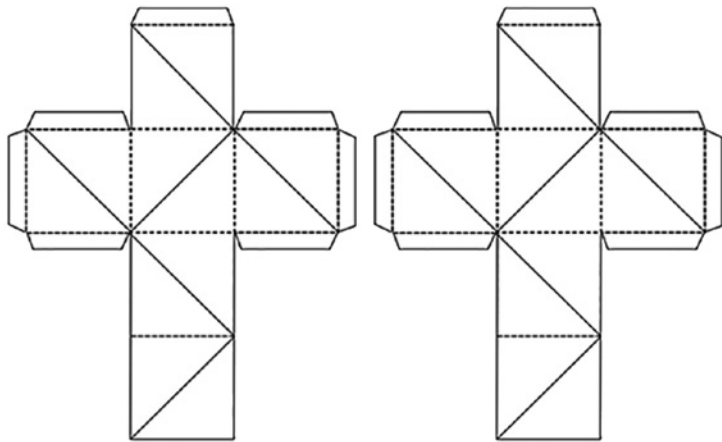
Let's Start!



Preparatory Drawings

Start by researching images of different animals in books, magazines or online. Have a good look at each animal and make observational drawings of a chosen animal from the front and side.

Note the shapes, features, textures and markings. If the animal is complicated in form or design, create a box picture drawing the animal head from 6 angles.



Make an Armature

An armature is a rigid internal structure in the general shape of the sculpture. Use scrap materials such as a cereal box for a badger or fox, a cardboard tube for a snake, a plastic bottle for a mouse or hedgehog or a circular tub for an owl - use your imagination!

You will be building onto this structure so don't worry if it is not the perfect shape – it's just to give some inner strength to your sculpture.



Make a Wall Base

Now you need to add a wall base to the sculpture so it can be displayed.

Use mount board in the shape of a cross section of the animal's neck so it will look like it is peeping through the wall.



Join the two together!

Staple and tape the base and armature firmly together at 45 degrees or right angles. It helps to hold the joined structure against the wall at the height you will hang it to check the creature will be facing forwards, “looking” at you!



Add the Padding

To create the 3D shape, use balls of newsprint or newspaper. Prepare by making a number in varying sizes – tennis ball size downwards.

Looking at the form of your animal, create muscle structure, tape the balls securely and squash them into place. The paper is moldable due to the air between the layers so form them into place like clay or plasticine to make the rough shape.



Add features

At this point add any appendages or formed features – eye sockets, ears, beaks and horns using strong tape or glue.

It is important to do it at the same time as adding the padding so that these items become an integral part of the design and don't fall off. Almost like trees have roots, the features need to “take root” in the structure.



Finishing surface

Create a 'skin' to seal the shape. Wrap lengths of gummed tape (or masking tape) around it; if using gummed tape, wet the tape and stretch it tightly over the form. As it dries it will shrink back holding everything in place.

Once your surface is dry, cover the sculpture with three layers of tissue paper. Rip tissue sheets in corresponding colours into small pieces and stick them with a 50:50 PVA and water mix. Use the preparatory drawings to apply colours and general markings in the correct place.



Detail

Finally add some detail. Make eyes, small teeth, fur, feathers, scales and other details separately using card and paper then stick these features on.

Cardboard feathers can be stuck to overlap in layers. A paper shredder or paper cut into long strips is great for creating fur. We printed onto tissue paper with bubble wrap to make scales.



Add...

Add a fitting for hanging the sculpture up; a hook and wire loop from a picture frame hanging kit can be super-glued into place so the final work can be hung from a hook, nail or screw on a wall.



Further Artists to Explore

Support your pupils to feel part of a wider group of artists creating wildlife and environment inspired art.

Abel Rodríguez

Painting/Drawing

Mogaje Guihu, who took the Western name Abel Rodríguez in the 1990s, grew up in the Muinane community who live near the headwaters of the Cahuinari River in the Colombian Amazon. His uncle, a sabedor (man of knowledge) taught him the knowledge of plants and he became known as el nombrador de plantas (the namer of plants). Now living in Columbia's capital Bogota, Rodríguez's precise, botanical illustrations are all created from memory.

Connections: Rainforest, plants, painting, colour.

Animalesque / Art Across Species and Beings

Various artists presenting artworks including sculpture, film, collage and drawing.

Animalesque brings together an outstanding selection of artworks – film and video, drawing and sculpture, installation and sound art – that invite its audience to rethink the human position in the world, its relationship to all other life forms and to the various complex ecologies that bond beings together.

Connections: Sculpture, plants, painting, colour.

Further Artists to Explore

Ifeoma U. Anyaeji: Ezuhu ezu – In(complete)

Sculpture/Installation

Ifeoma U. Anyaeji makes distinctive sculptures and installations from discarded bottles and non-biodegradable plastic bags. Interested in traditional craft processes and the use of non-conventional materials, her work explores transitions of West African culture, specifically drawing on the folklore, fashion, music and poetry of Nigeria, where she is from.

Connections: Rainforest, plants, painting, colour.

A Duck for Darwin, Evolutionary Thinking and the Struggle to Exist

Group exhibition with artists showcasing work across painting, installation, film and sculpture.

A Duck for Mr. Darwin is a group exhibition of contemporary artists exploring evolutionary thinking and the Theory of Natural Selection. The exhibition focuses on the legacy of Charles Darwin's ideas and is informed by the spirit of experimentation which was so distinctive to the time in which he lived.

A Duck for Mr. Darwin presents individual artworks which mix fact and fiction, experimentation and observation, methods of display and several artists' own research of and journeys to the Galapagos Islands.

Connections: Rainforest, plants, painting, colour.

Share your artworks with us!

We would love to see your artworks! Teachers and Home Educators can share these with us by email:

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Images on pages 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, courtesy of House of Hues.

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