

Crafty Ideas: **Giant Fantasy Insects**

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A huge colourful spider



This activity develops children's fascination with mini-beasts by encouraging them to conceive and create fantasy insects on a giant scale. It also develops observation and planning skills.

**You will need:**

- Knitting needle
- Newspapers
- Plastic-coated garden wire
- Masking tape
- Cellulose paste and PVA glue
- Acrylic paint
- Chicken wire
- Coloured tissue paper
- Yoghurt pots

**Use**

Use as part of your Design and Technology provision, or as an extension of work on mini beasts. This is an ideal project for children to work together in small groups over several weeks.

**Make**

- Before starting the project, thoroughly explore the subject of insects, asking the children to make sketches of body shapes and parts.
- Ask children to sketch out their designs for a giant fantasy insect, using the observations that they have made of shape and body parts, to create something completely new.
- Next, as a class, use a knitting needle or something similar to aid to roll up a plentiful supply of paper spills. Fasten each spill with masking tape.
- To create the body, use masking tape to fasten some of the spills together to form hoops. To add extra strength to the structure, cut lengths of plastic-coated wire and tape these into hoops. These form the rib cage of the creature. Join the ribs together with long paper spills and masking tape, alternating paper and wire ribs.
- When the basic structure is complete, carefully stuff it with scrunched up newspaper.
- Cover the whole structure with pasted pieces of newspaper. Time permitting, allow to dry between layers. Make necessary adjustments to the shape as work progresses.
- To make the head interlock several spill hoops to create a sphere. Repeat steps 2 and 3.
- When head and body are dry, tape together with masking tape and join with layers of pasted paper.
- To make the insect's legs, tape several spills together to the required thickness and length. Bend to form a knee joint. Wind around with long strips of pasted paper. Leave to dry.
- Using a craft knife, cut small holes in the sides of the insect and insert the legs. Tape into position and strengthen the join with layers of pasted paper. Insert the ends of the legs into black plastic film canisters and tape securely to the body.
- Tape yoghurt pots or similar small containers into position for the eyes. Cover with strips of paper. When dry, paint over the insects with vinyl emulsion.s. Add several coast of varnish if the structure is going to stand outside.

**If your fantasy insect has wings:**

- Wearing protective gloves, cut wing shapes from chicken wire. Bend any protruding pieces of wire over to create a smoother, safer edge.
- Using diluted PVA glue for strength, glue pieces of tissue paper over both sides of the wing. Wrap around the edges. Add several layers. Varnish when dry.
- Supporting the wings on the knees of the insect

**Display**

Giant fantasy insects look great in an outdoor location or arranged in a foyer or hall at school.

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