Crafty Ideas: Rock Pool Tapestry

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You will need:

- Rug canvas and fabric scraps
- Paints in a wide range of colours
- Paintbrushes
- Wools in marine colours
- Large-eyed blunt-ended needles
- Found objects from the seashore
- Scraps of netting
- String
- Scraps of upholstery fringing
- Fabric glue

A tapestry inspired by rock pools which incorporates found objects from the seaside

There are many wonderful still life arrangements to be found in nature, and the seashore is no exception. A trip to the coast or walk along the shore will reveal many interesting arrangements of rocks, pebbles, shells and flotsam. A rock pool stranded by the retreating tide is the inspiration for the tapestry in this activity.

Use

This makes a good creative follow up activity to a trip to the beach, or can link nicely to classwork on the seashore.

Make

- Look at rock pools and seascapes as a starting point for this activity. Encourage children to observe colours, forms and patterns and to describe what they see. If the activity is linked to a trip to the coast, ask children to make sketches, take pictures, and gather objects from the beach that inspire them or that they might want to incorporate into their work. You could also read the story *One World* by Michael Foreman to inform the children about the world of a rock pool.
- Cut the rug canvas to size and give to children to paint in various shades of grey and rock colours and leave to dry.
- To fill the background, ask children to thread two or three strands of different-coloured wools into a needle and stitch in and out of the holes in the canvas.
- Show children how they can vary the length and direction of the stitch. Sometimes missing two, or three holes, or even four or five holes, can help to create a natural organic effect in the tapestry.
- When the central part is covered, children can begin to sew on shells, string, net and bits of driftwood.
- Create sea anemones by rolling up and gluing short lengths of upholstery fringe. Alternatively, make a tassel by wrapping wool around a piece of card. Tie a short length of wool through one end of the loops and cut the other end. Tie a piece of wool around the top end of the tassel. Turn upside down and sew to the canvas.

Tip

Attach rocks and pebbles by wrapping them in netting and sewing through the net.

Display

Glue or sew the canvas to a piece of rock-coloured background fabric and mount on the wall. You may also want to document the making of the work by adding the photos and sketches that have inspired the work, and identifying the marine objects and species that children have observed. You could also add shells, driftwood, starfish, pebbles etc. to the display.

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