



Natural ink

- Letter formation
- Art techniques



Overview

This activity will explore how natural ingredients were traditionally used to create ink through history and allow children to experiment with different methods of mark making.

Resources

- Blackcurrants
- Jars
- Acorns
- Bark
- Reeds/hollow stems/feathers for natural brushes

Activity

1. Experiment with the three methods below to create different natural inks.
 - Add 10 acorns and small bits of bark to a jam jar. Cover with water and leave for a few days
 - Buy or forage for blackcurrants and cook in water over an open fire. Reduce the liquid to make purple ink
 - Crush ½ cup of berries through a sieve into a bowl. Add 1tsp of salt and 1tsp of vinegar. The vinegar will bind the pigment and the salt will preserve the ink.
2. Allow children to explore using the ink to make marks on the ground or large sheets of paper/fabric.

Suggested outcomes for learning and play

We understand you will tailor this activity to the learning needs of your pupils. Here are some of the learning outcomes and extension ideas that other practitioners have used this lesson idea to reach:

- To use instruments and different materials to mark make
- To explore the outcome when ingredients are mixed together

Subject	Topic	Ideas for further exploration
Literacy and language	Letter formation	Use ink to write letters or names
Science	States of matter	Talk about what is happening as the ink ingredients are mixed
Art	Using instruments to mark make	Use sticks, feathers or reeds to create brushes to use the inks with over history e.g. cave painting, quill and ink etc.
History	Past civilisations	Link to traditional writing methods and explain changes
Maths	Shape/number	Counting out and measuring the ingredients
		Use the ink to draw given shapes or numbers



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