



Set and Scenic Design

Project Type: Creative Tactile

Group/Individual: Group or Individual

Lesson Plan Audience: Maker Mentor, Maker

Time: 2 hours

Hard Skills: Building

Soft Skills: Design concepts, Planning, Spatial relationships

Ideal # of Participants: scalable

Age Group: 8+

Ideas for Taking it Further:

Difficulties/Tips: Some children may have difficulty understanding the limitations or the kinds of materials we have to work with (i.e. cardboard, paint, fabric, etc).



Materials:

Different colors of construction paper
Cardboard (if you have it)
Scissors
Markers or colored pencils
Glue stick
Hot glue
Misc. building materials

STEPS

1. Brainstorm: Talk to your students about what kind of movie you're making. You should have already established a loose plot or central idea. Ask them about the characters they've created, where these characters live, what colors or kinds of shapes they might associate with, where they go, and how many different sets you'll need for the movie. Talk about foreground, middleground and background space, and where the actors will be moving on the set.
2. Start drawing! Use at least three different sheets of paper to represent the foreground, middleground and background. For example, if your scene takes place in a mountainous region, you can use the background layer to draw a sky, the middle ground layer to draw some large rocky shapes, and the foreground could be some small loose rocks.
3. Cut it out! Keep the background layer intact, and cut the drawn shapes out of the middle ground and background. Try to leave extra space for a tab on the bottom of each shape so it can be folded behind and glued down to stand upright, like a diorama.
4. Use two pieces of cardboard approximately the size of the paper you drew on. Hot glue the together in an "L" shape, like an open laptop. Now cut out two right triangles that are the same size. Glue these on the back of your upright piece of cardboard at each end. The right triangles should support the "L" and keep it propped up.
5. Glue it down! Start with your background and use a glue stick to attach it to the upright cardboard piece. You can also glue down a piece of colored paper to represent your stage or floor. Next, fold back the tabs on the middleground and foreground shapes and glue them down so they stand upright. Consider how much space your actors will need to maneuver around objects.
6. Now you have a small-scale maquette of your set! This is very useful in showing kids a master plan while building the full scale version. Talk about which materials will be used for which parts and then build your set!
8. Paint , decorate, go crazy!

Tips:

- Consider how you will prop up the actual set pieces, and if they will move or stay static. Foamcore is strong and lightweight. Wood can also be used.
- It's easier to add detail at the decorating stage. Think basic shape when making the original form.
- Work with the kids to make far-fetched or imaginative ideas possible. Allow them creative space, but try to help them understand how these objects will be made and used.
- You can combine multiple elements of different kids' designs.