



PAL at Home

Preschool Art Lab activities for families to make together

ARTS PLUS

“Plastic Bag Butterflies”

This activity is appropriate for ages 3 and up

Time from start to finish = 10-20 minutes depending on difficulty level or variation

You will need the following materials:

- A plastic sandwich or snack bag
- Various beads or other small objects (try kitchen items such as rice and beans, or small colorful paper)
- A clothespin (a twist tie or rubberband can work as well)



Brief project description

- For this project, small children will use various fine motor skills to create simple 3-D ‘butterflies’.

Steps

- #1: Have your child help gather small interesting objects from around the house. Beads, sequins, small paper, and other objects work well. If you don’t have a supply of objects, try looking through kitchen cabinets for rice, beans, and small dry pasta.
- #2: Put objects out in a bowl or other container alongside the plastic bag and the clothespin.
- #3: Have your child open the bag (this can be a challenging motor skill for younger children and is good for them to practice!) and place the objects they like and find interesting into the bag. For older children, try having them put a certain number of objects in the bag and count them. You can also have them put only red objects, round objects, or any other variation that helps them find patterns and matching shapes/colors. Try not to overstuff the bag!



- #4: Have your child close the bag by pinching and sliding their fingers along the closure (younger children will likely need help with this). After closing the bag have your child pinch the middle of the bag and twist it around to make 2 'wings'.

- #5: After creating the 2 'wings' by pinching and twisting the middle, have your child use the clothespin to secure the middle and create the 'body' of the butterfly. I like to demonstrate the use of clothespins by relating the 'open/close' motion of the pin to the snapping of an alligator's mouth.



- *To extend this activity, vary the objects you put in the bag by specific category (only red objects, only round objects, etc.) or in the second go round ask your child to 'teach' you the activity by listing and demonstrating the steps themselves.*