



# The Sunny Pages

At home art activities to brighten your day

ARTS PLUS

## “Mexican Amate Inspired Art”

This activity is appropriate for ages 7 - 12

Time from start to finish = 45 minutes – 1 hour

You will need the following materials:

- Pencil
- Tan/brown construction paper (brown paper bag will work too!)
- Oil pastels, markers, or colored pencils (paint works too!)
- Black sharpie

### Brief project description:

Create your very own Mexican Amate inspired art! Amate paintings are Mexican folk art masterpieces in which artists make both the amate (paper) and the painting on top. Traditionally, amate is made from tree bark. The men in the villages gather the tree bark and the women create the paper. Amate, although similar to paper, is more durable and has more of a fabric consistency.

Mexican amate paintings depict daily life, history, or the fauna and flora (animals and plants) that are native to the region. Think about the animals and plants that live around your neighborhood. Take a nature walk with your parents and sketch the plants and animals you see as a warm-up exercise before doing the project.



## Steps

- **#1:** Take your tan/brown construction paper and crumple it up. Open it, flatten it out, and repeat. Do this crumpling process at least 5 times. This will create a lot of tiny creases in the paper. If you are using a brown paper bag, unfold it and extend it before crumpling it.
- **#2:** Unfold your crumpled paper and smooth it out a bit. Gently draw your design on the flattened paper with your pencil. Keep in mind that the crumpling process makes the paper both smoother and softer, so please be gentle while drawing. If your drawing creates a hole in the paper, it's okay! This just adds to the character of your art.
- **#3:** Once you have your design drawn in pencil, go over the lines in black sharpie. Then color it in with either oil pastels, markers, colored pencils, or paint! Oil pastels are my favorite because they blend nicely on the paper. Amate paintings have bright, bold colors so don't be afraid to color in your animals with bright pinks, blues, or other fantastical animal colors. Remember that your paper is delicate, so be careful as you color.



- #4: When you have finished coloring your painting try one final step and make a decorative edge. Gently tear the edges of the paper to create an edge with more texture, similar to real amate paintings.



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