

ALEBRIJES: MYSTERIOUS CREATURES

THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITY WILL GUIDE THE STUDENTS AS THEY EXPLORE THE ROLE OF SCIENCE IN ART. STUDENTS WILL EXPLORE THE ENGINEERING AND DESIGN PROCESS BY CREATING “ALEBRIJES”, A MYSTERIOUS CREATURE THAT REPRESENTS A UNIQUE MOMENT IN THEIR LIVES. THROUGH THEIR WORK, STUDENTS WILL INCORPORATE MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND ART. ADDITIONALLY, STUDENTS WILL PROVIDE POSITIVE FEEDBACK TO EACH OTHER’S ART PIECES BY INTERPRETING THE ARTWORK.

Standards:

Standard 1.4: Innovative Designer: Students use a variety of technologies within a design process to identify and solve problems by creating new, imaginative, and effective solutions.

<https://www.iste.org/standards/iste-standards-for-students>

1.4.a Students recognize and use a deliberate design process for generating ideas, testing theories, creating innovative artifacts, and solving authentic problems.

1.4.b Students select and use digital tools to plan and manage a design process that considers design constraints and calculated risks.

1.4.c Students develop, test, and refine prototypes as part of a cyclical design process.

1.4.d Students exhibit a tolerance for ambiguity, perseverance, and the capacity to work with open-ended problems.

Background Information:

The history of the “Alebriges” is as unique as the “Alebriges” themselves. It all began in 1936 with the artist Pedro Linares, who at the age of 30 became ill with a high fever and almost died. When Pedro was almost unconscious, he saw some weird hallucinations such as strange, brightly colored creatures made of different animal parts. During these hallucinations the only word he was hearing was “Alebriges”. Pedro eventually recovered and returned to work but now his goal was to recreate the strange creatures he saw by using paper, and he called them “Alebriges”.



Lesson Title: Alebriges: mysterious creatures

Materials Needed:

- Student pages
- Tissue paper or newspaper
- Cornstarch
- Water
- Paint, bright colors, if possible
- Cardboard
- Straws
- Tape
- Paint brush
- Internet access (optional)
- Computer, Chromebook, cellphone, or tablet (optional)

Implementation:

The first part of the activity will provide more information about “Alebriges” as well as how to make a simple model. Use the links below to introduce the topic and prepare your students for the activity.



<https://youtu.be/7bkaQnqrpUc>

<https://cantigny.org/things-to-do/alebrijes/artwork/#malucan>

<https://youtu.be/y9XO40KmrEY>

The second part of the activity will consist of creating a homemade glue. This unique glue consists of mixing water with cornstarch or flour. This is the most traditional glue for craftwork in Mexico (and inexpensive).

The third part is for students to create their own “Alebrije” by molding newspaper into the desired shape and supporting their model with straws. There will be a set criteria for the “Alebrijes” to ensure that all the students have the same baseline for their models.

The fourth part will allow the students to paint their “Alebrijes”. Students will mix and match any color they want in order to make their “Alebrijes” bright and unique. After the students have completed their “Alebrije” they will create a profile for their creation with information such as name, meaning/description, material, animals that inspired their design, number of pieces (tails, wings, claws horns), and time spent on the project.

Lastly, students will create a gallery walk to display their art (ask the students to cut the dotted line and place the “Alebrije’s biography” next to the artwork). Students will give positive and constructive criticism to each other’s artwork by using the critique template at the end of the student pages(cut the dotted line and leave the critique paper next to the artwork).

Discussion Ideas:

- What did you know about “Alebrijes” before this activity?
- What inspired you to create your “Alebrije”?
- What would you create if you had the chance to create a monumental “Alebrije” with no restrictions at all? Why?

Allow time for students to ask any questions and discuss the process.

Extensions:

Students will recreate a 3ft by 5ft “Alebrije” by dividing the project into multiple pieces. Every group of students will create a section of the “Alebrije” and then place them together at the end. The students will have one topic in common, which is their school’s mascot or school’s identity.

Student Page

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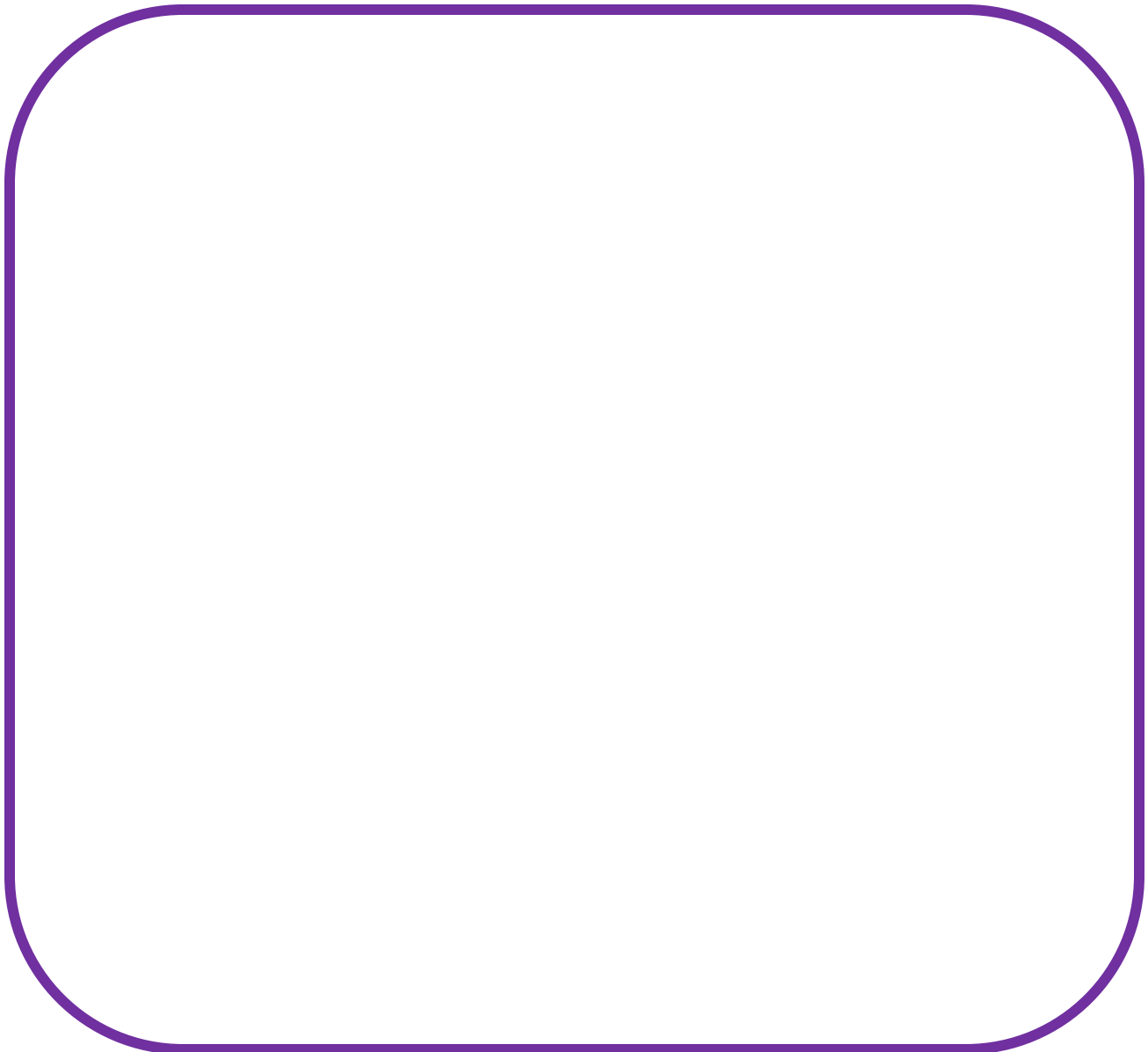
“Alebriges”. Pedro eventually got better and returned to work but now his goal was to recreate the strange creatures he saw by using paper and he called them “Alebriges”.

What is an “Alebrije”?

Student Page

	How do I make my glue?
Total amount in ml.	
Water %	
Flour/cornstarch%	
Results	

Designing my "Alebrije"



Student Page

My Alebrije	
Name	
Meaning/Description	
Animals used	
Number of pieces (tails, wings, claws horns)	
Time spent	

Critique Template

Title of work	
Something that really caught my eye was...	
Something that the artist did really well was...	
The artwork shows	
I would have liked to see more...	
The artwork makes me feel...	