Pearl at Home

Art projects designed for suggested ages of 5 and up, designed to be completed at home with easily-accessible art materials.

MARBLED EARTH

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MARBLED EARTH

MATERIALS

• White cardstock or construction paper (cardstock preferred)
• Dark-colored cardstock or construction paper
• Round object to trace, 5.5 – 6.5” in diameter
  Suggestions: Bowl, small saucepan, full paper towel roll
• Pencil  • Scissors  • Round plate
• Blue and green food color  • Shaving cream  • Squeegee or ruler
• Wax paper or paper towels (for a work surface)
• Glue (spray adhesive or liquid)
• Optional: • Colored pencils, pastels, or crayons  • Gloves  • Tape

ABOUT THE PROJECT

Paper marbling is a technique that has been popular in many cultures for centuries. Traditionally, a special kind of ink or pigment is floated on water, and the design is then transferred to paper or fabric. In this project, we’ll recreate the marbling effect using common household items – food coloring and shaving cream!

Please note: Food coloring stains surfaces, so try hard not to get it on surfaces in your home or on your hands.

DIRECTIONS

1 Cut out your circle
Use your pencil to trace your round object onto your white paper. Cut out the circle and set aside.

2 Spray the shaving cream
Shake the can of shaving cream for about 5-10 seconds. Dispense shaving cream to cover the bottom of the plate, just inside the rim, in a single layer. Too much shaving cream will make it much messier! We suggest starting with a big circle, and working your way towards the center in continuously smaller circles.

TIP: Keep the can upright while spraying!
Add blue drops
Carefully drip 8-12 drops of blue food color onto your shaving cream (depending on the size of your plate), making sure they’re spaced out across the whole bottom of the plate.

You should have drops near your edges and in the middle.

Add green drops
Do the same using the green food color: Drip 8-12 drops across your shaving cream. It’s okay if the drops overlap!
6 Make the swirls!
Holding your knife upright or at a 45° angle, press down the tip of the knife in your shaving cream (touching the bottom of the plate), and drag it back and forth through the drops. Try going top to bottom, then left to right in a swirling pattern.

IMPORTANT TIPS:
• Always lead with the narrow edge of the knife while dragging.
• Don’t swirl too much! You want to be able to see swirls of blue and green, and pockets of white. Swirling too much will lead to a solid seafoam green.

Make sure that you drag the swirls out to cover an area as wide as your paper circle. Hover your circle over your plate to check.

If the colored area isn’t as big as your circle, use a clean knife to carefully drag out the color a bit more.
Press your circle down
Place your circle on top of your shaving cream. If you have pencil lines showing on your circle edge from the tracing, place that side facing up towards you, so the clean side goes down into the shaving cream.

Lightly press your circle into the shaving cream. Press down on all areas and edges to make sure the entire circle touches the shaving cream.

Optional:
If you don’t want to get your fingers dirty or stained from the food coloring, put a glove on your non-dominant hand for the next couple of steps. You’ll use this hand to grab and hold down the circle.

Lift up your circle
Grab your circle on an edge and slowly lift it up. If you’re not wearing a glove, try picking the circle up in a white area so you don’t get dye on your hands. Place it on your wax paper or paper towel work surface with the shaving cream side up.
9 **Squeegee time!**

*Be sure to perform this step on top of wax paper or paper towels. You can tape down the edges to make sure your work surface doesn’t move.*

Use the thumb on your non-dominant hand to hold down your circle at the edge furthest away from you. With your other hand, hold your squeegee or ruler at a 45° angle and press it down right next to your thumb. Pull back and scrape off the shaving cream!

Use a medium amount of pressure when scraping. You don’t have to press your hardest, but do press down enough to scrape off the shaving cream sufficiently.

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10 **Clean your Earth’s surface**

After your first “pass” with the squeegee or ruler, lift your thumb and move it to a different spot on your circle (an edge that’s already been scraped). Hold down your circle, then flip your squeegee or ruler over and use the **clean side** to scrape the shaving cream from the spot where your thumb initially was.

If you still have shaving cream left on your Earth’s surface, make a second pass with the squeegee or ruler. The food coloring dries quickly, so don’t worry about the color smearing with a second pass. Just be sure to use a clean edge each time! Use a paper towel to wipe off any shaving cream left on your paper.
11 Clean up your work area
Move your Earth off to the side and let it dry for a few minutes on a paper towel. In the meantime, use a paper towel to wipe the shaving cream off of your squeegee or ruler, and push the shaving cream onto your wax paper or paper towel work surface. If you used a glove, you can take it off now - the messy part is over! Carefully bundle up your work surface and throw it away.

TIP: Food coloring stains surfaces, so try hard not to get it on surfaces in your home or on your hands. To remove food coloring from your hands, try using dishwashing soap.

12 Glue your Earth to your background
After your Earth has dried for at least 5 minutes, you’re ready to glue. Spray adhesive works best, but liquid glue (like Elmer's) will also work.

• If using spray adhesive, perform this step outdoors. Place your Earth face-down in a cardboard box. Follow the manufacturer’s directions and spray an even coat on the back of your Earth (about 2 seconds). Flip over and glue onto your dark paper. Press down on your Earth for a few seconds to make it stick more securely.

• If using liquid glue, squeeze it on the back of your Earth in a pattern like the one below. Glue it onto your dark paper, then press down for a few seconds.

13 Decorate the universe!
Use colored pencils, pastels, or crayons to decorate the background. You can add stars, planets, or whatever else you think might be out there!