Positively Paper!

Featured Story:
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The Paper Bag Princess
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Inspiration from WAM’s Collection

Women’s Equality
1975, Marisol, color lithograph, 1976.146 (eMuseum Link)

This print was made to remember all the hard work that has been put into the women’s equality movement - to give women the same opportunities and rights as men. We see two figures facing us, serious expressions on their faces. Below the faces, we see two hands clasped as a symbol of working together. In “The Paper Bag Princess”, Elizabeth was proving that a princess--or any girl--does not always need saving.

Bust of a Woman
1987, Thota Vaikuntam, graphite underdrawing with ink wash and watercolor on laminated paperboard, 2002.513 (eMuseum Link)

This is one of a series of paintings done by Thota Vaikuntam that focused on the strong women in the artist’s native Telangana Region. The artist was drawn to the strong figures enough that he painted many women like this from the region. Just like this woman in the painting, Elizabeth from the book is showing that she is strong and resourceful.

Fantastic Sagas: Soldier
2013. Robert Pruitt, Conté and mixed media on hand-dyed paper, 2019.29.1 (eMuseum Link)

This work was created as part of a comic series that put futuristic, black women in the center of the story as heroines saving the world! The way she is standing, the color red, the mask and armor are all symbols of strength. Do you think the needs these things to feel strong, or would she seem just as strong in a paper bag dress? As a heroine, her strength comes from inside - just like Elizabeth’s in “The Paper Bag Princess”.

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Paper Bag Activity Page

Draw yourself and maybe a friend wearing these paper bags! What would you do in a paper bag? Climb mountains, go up against dragons, learn to skateboard?
Paper Scrap Couture

Supplies

- Piece of background paper
- Scrap paper
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Scissors
- Tape or glue
- Your choice of crayons, colored pencils, markers, or ink/pens
- Optional mixed media: sequins, string, cotton fluff, fabric, glitter

Create

Let’s use paper as a fun, unexpected material to draw clothing, fashion, and armor designs!

1. First, have fun crumpling and tearing paper! Any paper will do - paper bag paper, scrap paper tissue paper...
2. Crumple and fold the paper to get it wrinkly. You can even sit on it or step on it!
3. Tear it into small shapes.
4. Glue these pieces on your background paper and see what armor or fashions you can make out of them!
5. Using a pencil, draw the rest of the details for the person wearing the clothing or armor, or the item itself.
6. You can even add color like above to make your design more complete!
Paper Pillar Portraits
We are going to have fun with paper! This will likely be a two-day project with the sculpting on the first day and the decorating done on the second day.

Supplies - Part 1
- Paper Towel/Toilet Paper Tubes or
- Shallow bowl or cup with water
- Towel/paper towels for water drips
- Optional: Pencil and scissors

Supplies - Part 2
- Tube Sculptures, completely dry!
- Optional: Pencil & Eraser
- CHOOSE Painting Supplies:
  - Tempera or acrylic paint
  - Paint brushes, paper towels
- OR Drawing Supplies like Markers

Create - Part 1 : Sculpting
1. Gather your tubes and, if needed, cut them to about 4” in length.
2. Prepare your work space with a towel and water in a bowl or cup.
3. Dunk your tube all the way, or half of the way, into the water and hold for just a second or two.
4. Pull the moistened tube out and test if it can be bent. You don’t want it so wet that it tears.
5. Now have some fun! Fold, push, pull, and poke the tube into a funny face shape. If you want, you can make cuts in the tube and then work with it.
6. Leave the tube to dry on the towel and have fun with any other tubes you have set aside.
7. Let them sit until completely dry and the cardboard has re-hardened.

Create - Part 2 : Decorating
1. Choose how you want to decorate your pillar portraits - paint or drawing.
2. You can choose to draw out a few details in pencil first, or not!
3. If PAINTING, you can paint in layers, painting the whole background, then letting it dry and painting details on top, or you could paint in sections.
4. If DRAWING, you will have to work in sections.
5. You can choose to decorate with only a few, or a lot of details.
6. When finished decorating (and when dry, if painting) you can display these by themselves, or you can stack them in a column or pillar!