Animal Habitats: An Ecological Mural of Planet Earth

By **Vicki Ostersen**

In this post Arts Educator Vicki Ostersen showcases a project she delivered to a large year 2 group at her local Primary School. The project explores animal habitats and took the form of a large scale mural pasted onto boards and mounted on an empty brick wall within the school grounds.

Notes for Teachers

- **Who is this resource aimed at?**

  The mural was made with Year 2 children, aged 6-7. It could easily be adapted for older children, though younger children may struggle with having the dexterity needed for the scissors.

It's worth noting that the number of children involved in the project was a major factor in determining the size of the artwork. I had more than 100, but a class of 30 would require a much smaller board or piece of paper. A mural could also be made in smaller sections, one per class maybe, and then displayed next to each other.

- ## What are the aims in terms of process and skill?

The aim of the project was to produce one piece of art work with more than 100 children, ensuring the contribution of each child was included. We wanted to really explore up-cycling and to raise the children's awareness of the planet, its animals and habitats and its resources. We also wanted them to enjoy the process of collage, learn about colour mixing with paint and improve their cutting skills.

- ## How long will the activity take?

The project took place in school. The children had one afternoon with their teachers when they painted the collage paper and talked about and drew their animals on pre-prepared worksheets. Each class then had an 1.5 hour afternoon collage workshop. I assembled the mural outside of school without the involvement of the children.

- ## What materials will I need?

Plenty of coloured paper, including scrap and recycled papers

Scissors

PVA Glue as well as exterior PVA glue

Paints & brushes

- **What artists could we look at to inform and inspire?**

We looked at the beautiful painted tissue paper collages of Eric Carle, which he creates to illustrate his books such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar'. We also looked at the paper cut-outs created by Henri Matisse in the latter stages of his career.

Eric Carle

Henri Matisse

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