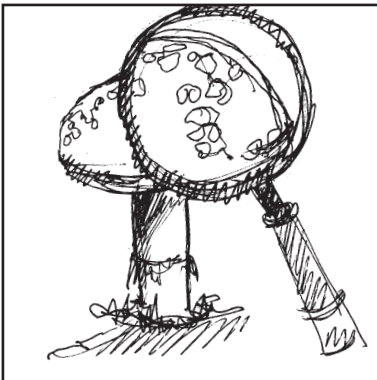


WORKSHEET 9

NOTES

Health and Safety
ALWAYS WASH
YOUR HANDS
AFTER TOUCHING
FUNGI



MAKING PAPER WITH FUNGI

Paper is basically a flat mat of fibres. Although handmade paper is traditionally made with vegetable fibres, the basic process is no different for fungi, except you are using a chitin rather than a cellulose base.

You will need:

Some bracket fungi
A tray (e.g. cat litter tray)
A heavy weight
2-3 sheets of blotting paper
A blender
10-12 pieces of absorbent cloth (slightly larger than intended size of paper)
A mesh frame (specialised paper-making frames can be bought from art shops but home-made alternatives are fine. e.g. mesh netting spread over an embroidery hoop).
Water - lots!

What to do:

1. Chop up clean bracket fungi and blend them with a small quantity of water in a blender. The amount of fungus required is enough to make a fluffy marshmallow-like consistency when blended with the water. The consistency is important - too watery and the paper will end up too thin, too concentrated and the paper will be lumpy.
2. Pour the mixture into the tray, along with some more water.
3. Place the mesh frame into the tray until all of the mesh is covered by mashed bracket. Gently remove the mesh and hold it above the tray until most of the water has drained away.
4. Quickly invert the mesh onto a piece of cloth and then carefully lift it away from the paper mat. Place another piece of cloth on top of the paper and press gently.
5. Repeat until you have a pile of 10 - 12 sheets of fungal paper.
6. Place the weight on top of the pile to squeeze out the remaining water and then hang the stack of cloth sheets and paper up to dry.
7. Separate the sheets of paper from the cloth and press onto blotting paper if necessary for final drying.

Tips

- Experiment with mixing different types of fungi to make mottled paper.
- Look at www.rbge.org.uk/data/celtica/fungi/paper.htm for some beautiful results.