

Shining Constructivism

Around the 1920s, a movement in modern art began in Russia as a group of artists began constructing sculpture for an industrialized world. Building assemblages from pre-made or “real” objects rather than creating pieces from their creative imagination, this “constructivist” style was soon intriguing artists worldwide. As new technology produced strong, shining surfaces of glass, steel and plastic, Constructivists pioneered the use of modern, mechanical materials in painting and sculpture, and heavily influenced the emerging art forms of photography, film, fashion and graphic design.

This project weaves a variety of classroom-friendly “metals” — papers, foils and wires — into relief and 3D art that resemble twisted and stressed metal forms. Explore the endless possibilities of materials that can be used to “construct” art!

Grade Levels 5-12

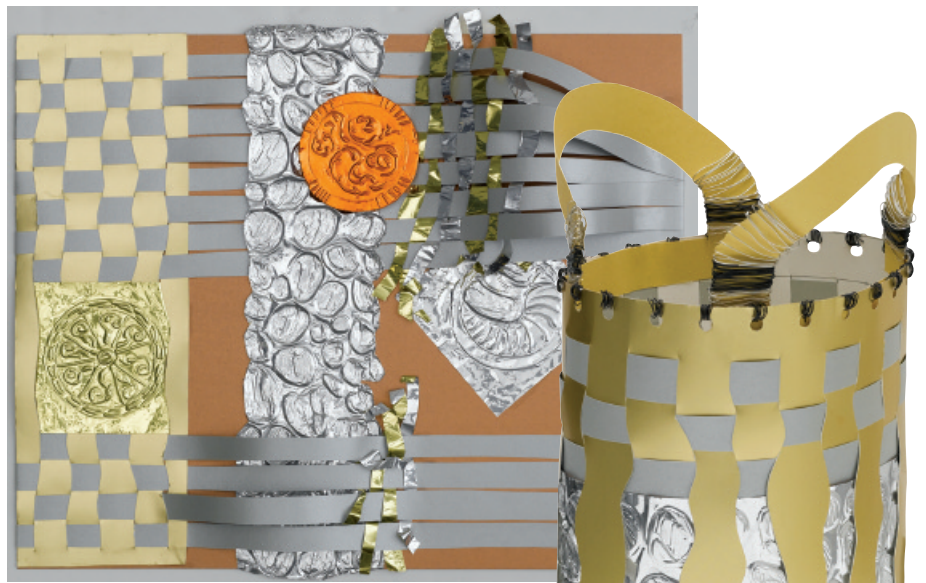
Note: instructions and materials based on a class of 25 students. Adjust as needed.

Preparation

1. Cut Railroad Board in fourths (11” x 14”), need one piece per student for the structural base.
2. Precut metallic papers, foil, cardstock and boards into a variety of strips for weaving. The materials suggested provide texture and are sturdy enough for weaving.
3. Blick Construction Card can be folded and scored to form 3D pieces.

Process

1. Weave a variety of “metallic” materials through the Railroad



Materials

Assorted metallic paper, foil and wire, including, but not limited to:

Blick® Construction Card, 140-lb, 18” x 24”, Gold (11408-4079) and Silver (11408-2599); share six sheets each across class

Folia Corrugated Sheets, Gold and Silver, (12231-1030); need two packages each

Crescent® Metallic Matboard, 32” x 40”, Silver (13007-2597) and Gold (13007-4056); need two sheets of each

Folia Paper Aluminum Folding Sheets, pkg of 50, 6” x 6” (12230-1006); need five packages

Colorfoil Economy Foil, 4-1/2” x 20-ft roll, Brass (60506-8410) or Coppertone (60506-8110); need two rolls each

Copper Colored Wire, 22-gauge, 6-roll set includes 2 each Copper, Silver and Gold, (60688-2022); need four sets

Student Modeling Tools, 7-piece set (30361-1009); share two sets across class

Duron Plastic Tools, 12-piece set (30322-1009); share two sets across class

Ten Seconds Studio® Metal Tools, asst. sets (60516-); share 2-3 across class

Weldbond® Universal Adhesive, 8-oz bottles (23819-1105); share eight across class

Alvin® Snap-Off Blade Knife (57514-1100); share six across class

Fiskars® Bent Scissors, 3-3/4” cut, (57012-1008); share three across class

Snippy® Scissors, 12-pack pointed, (57040-2009); need one per student

Board base; create contours and curves or connect the ends to create a 3-dimensional cylinder.

2. Incorporate rhythm and line behind open spaces.
3. Add sections of twisted foils and pieces of wire — using scissors rather than industrial torches on steel!
4. Use modeling tools to stretch and mold the metal foil. Try using them on the surface of the metallic boards for texture

Options

1. Add pre-formed metal, glass and plastic that represents shiny modern design.
2. Construct a 3D model with the Crescent metallic matboard.

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National Standards

Content Standard #2 Using knowledge of structures and functions

K-4 Students describe how different materials, techniques, and processes cause different responses

5-8 Students generalize about the effects of visual structures and functions and reflect upon these effects in their own work

9-12 Students evaluate the effectiveness of artworks in terms of organizational structures and functions

Content Standard #4 Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures

K-4 Students demonstrate how history, culture, and the visual arts can influence each other in making and studying works of art

5-8 Students analyze, describe, and demonstrate how factors of time and place (such as climate, resources, ideas, and technology) influence visual characteristics that give meaning and value to a work of art

9-12 Students differentiate among a variety of historical and cultural contexts in terms of characteristics and purposes of works of art