

Artisanal Dyeing in Latin America

Textile Workshop, 2016

Target Audience: Middle or High School (Grades 6-12)

RELATED CONTENT AREAS

Spanish | Art | Social Studies | Science (Biology, Chemistry) | History | Geography

INSTRUCTIONS

Overview	In this lesson, students will explore the techniques, materials and processes used in the natural, artisanal dyeing process influenced by cultures in Latin America.		
Standards	Tennessee Visual Art Curriculum Standards 1.0 Students will understand and apply media, techniques, and processes. 4.0 Students will understand the visual arts in relation to history and cultures. 6.0 Students will make connections between visual arts and other disciplines. Tennessee Modern Language Standards 1. Communicate in a language other than English. 2. Gain knowledge and understanding of other cultures. 3. Connect with other disciplines and acquire information.		
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Students will be able to interpret and apply the natural dyeing process of wool.• Students will be able to explore and identify the dyeing qualities of different materials when mixed with hot water.• Students will be able to relate the dyeing process with cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.	Materials	
Time	Variable	Vocabulary	Alum, Annatto, Brazil wood, Card, Chamomile, Cochineal, Cream of Tartar, Hibiscus, Mordant, Pots (large, steel), Scour, Sodium Chloride, Spin, Tongs, Turmeric, Water (hot), Wool, Yarn

PROCEDURE

1. Teacher will share a cultural and historical overview of traditional dyeing and weaving in Central and South America. Teacher may utilize the notes from CLAS Workshop to share first-hand knowledge.
2. Teacher will determine the level of involvement students will have with the dyeing process based on grade and ability levels. The following may be done prior to class, as a demonstration, or in class with students.
3. Scour (pre-wash) the wool with neutral soap and warm water to remove residue. This ensures more saturated colors and helps the dye to adhere to the material uniformly.
4. Mordant the wool with alum and cream of tartar.
5. Students may engage with the materials used for dyeing. Let students make observations and predictions, scaffolding with sentence stems if needed. Examples: What does this material remind you of? How does it feel? Can you predict what color _____ will dye the wool?
6. For each color, prepare one pot with enough water to cover the yarn. Mix the dye in and let the water come to a boil. Submerge the yarn in the dye and turn the temperature down, leaving the dye to simmer. To make the color lighter or darker, adjust the amount of dye and/or the length of time you let the yarn sit in the mixture. Experiment with adding alkaline and acidic substances to the mixture, such as lemon or baking soda, to alter the color.
7. Remove the yarn when it is several shades darker than you would like. Rinse the yarn and hang to dry.
8. Analyze the results. How did the process determine the final outcome? Was it what you expected?
9. Optional: Utilize the resultant dyed wool to create bracelet, weaving, etc.

EVALUATION

Evaluation techniques will vary based on teacher-selected outcomes.

Natural Textile Dyeing Vocabulary

English	Spanish	Definition
Alum	Alumbre	A common dye mordant (see below).
Annato dye	Achiote	A natural orange dye.
Baking soda	Bicarbonato de sodio	An alkaline substance used to alter the pH to change and intensify a color.
Brazilwood	Palo de Brasil	A natural orange-pink dye.
Chamomile leaves	Hojas de manzanilla	A natural yellow dye.
Cochineal	Cochinilla	A natural dark red dye.
Cotton	Algodón	A soft, white substance that surrounds the seeds of a plant. It is used as a textile fiber and thread for various products.
Cream of tartar	Crémor tártaro	A common dye mordant.
Dyeing	Teñido	The process of coloring fibers, yarns or fabrics.
Hibiscus (flower)	Jamaica	A natural pink dye.
Indigo	Añil	A natural blue dye.
Lemon	Limón	An acidic substance used to alter the pH to change and intensify a color.
Mordant	Mordiente	A naturally occurring, water-soluble pre-treatment fixative for the dye. The mordant is applied after the wool is washed, before the wool is immersed in the colored dye bath. Common mordants include alum and cream of tartar.
Red onion	Cebolla morada	A natural light green dye.

Natural Textile Dyeing Vocabulary

English	Spanish	Definition
Red roses	Rosas rojas	A natural pink dye.
Sodium chloride	Cloruro de sodio en grano	An alkaline substance used to alter the pH to change and intensify a color.
Spin	Hilar	After the sheep wool has been cut and washed, it is spun. Spinning is the twisting together of drawn out strands of fibers to form yarn.
Prickly pear	Pitalla	A natural magenta dye.
Turmeric (ground)	Cúrcuma molida	A natural yellow dye.
Wool	Lana de oveja	The fine, soft, curly hair that forms the coat of sheep that is spun into yarn.
Vinager	Vinagre	An acidic substance used to alter the pH to change and intensify a color.
Yarn	Hilo	Spun thread that is used for knitting, weaving or sewing.