

Rex-Lace® Appliqué

(art + social studies)

The traditional folk craft of straw appliqué — using various shades of dry straw adhered to a rigid surface to create scenes and artwork of all sorts — has been practiced in many nations. Straw has always been inexpensive, readily available and easy to work with. The country of Belarus (Belorussia) is particularly noted for its straw appliqué as its artisans developed dyeing techniques to create festive colors.

Students can create their own appliqué designs with a very modern medium: bright, vinyl craft lacing — familiar for making lanyards and bracelets — easily cut in pieces and laid side-by-side on an adhesive surface to form colorful designs. The finished pieces are flexible and have a high gloss surface.

Grade Levels K-6

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

Process

1. Cut Printfoam to the desired size using scissors or a paper trimmer. Draw the design on the back side in reverse with a pencil, then trace over the pencil lines with a black permanent marker. The design will be visible through the foam.
2. Peel the protective non-stick cover sheet away from the Printfoam and cut away a corner area of the sheet with scissors. Press the sheet back into place. It's recommended to work one area at a time and keep the adhesive covered in areas not being used.
3. Cut pieces of RexLace to fill areas of the design with color, one strip at a time. Press the RexLace into place piece by piece, continuing until all areas of the design are complete. Remember to peel back the cover sheet and cut it away as areas are being worked.



Above: work in progress, with Printfoam adhesive visible

Left: Close-up view actual size

Materials

RexLace®, assorted colors (60921-); share four or more spools across class

Inovart® Printfoam with Adhesive Back, package of 12 (40408-0000); cut each 9" x 12" sheet in half to make 9" x 6" pieces or fourths to make 4-1/2" x 6" pieces; need one piece per student

Snippy® Kushy Grip Scissors (57095-2005); one per student

Sharpie® Fine Point Markers, black (21316-2001); one per student

National Standards for Visual Arts Education

Content Standard #1 — Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes

K-4 Students use art materials and tools in a safe and responsible manner

5-8 Students intentionally take advantage of the qualities and characteristics of art media, techniques, and processes to enhance communication of their experiences and ideas

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

K-4 Students know that the visual arts have both a history and specific relationships to various cultures

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

