

Homemade Jellyfish Fields



Simple Supplies:

- Heavy-weight paper bowls
- White Yarn
- Colorful Acrylic Paint
- Paint Brushes and Painting Supplies
- Scissors
- Zipper Sandwich Bags
- Skewer or Sharp Pencil
- Paper Towels

*Tip – For a cooler option, try using Glow-in-the-Dark acrylic paint in place of the normal acrylic paint for a night time view of your jellyfish field.

How To:

1. Paint the heavy-weight paper bowl inside and out. The bowl will become the main body of the jellyfish. If using the glow-in-the-dark option, you will need to use two or more coats of paint for a brighter "glow."

2. For the tentacles, cut 10 - 12 pieces of yarn approximately 36 inches in length. Place them in a zipper sandwich bag with several squirts of paint and seal the bag. Then, squish the bags until the yarn is completely covered, adding more paint if necessary. If the paint is too thick, add a little water to the bag.
3. Carefully remove the painted strings from the bags and place them to dry on the paper towels. Depending on the amount of paint on the string, you may want to use several layers of paper towels to avoid paint from seeping through and onto other surfaces.
4. At the center of the bowl, punch two holes about a half inch apart using a skewer or sharp pencil.
5. Cut an unpainted, new piece of yarn approximately 40 inches long. Thread it through the two holes so that both ends come out the bottom of the bowl.
6. From the inside of the bowl, pull the yarn up to form a small loop. Thread the dried tentacles through and roughly center them under the loop.
7. Flip the bowl, pulling the yarn tight before tying the yarn with a double knot on the outside of the bowl.
8. Back on the inside of the bowl, grasp each side of the tentacles as one bunch each and tie them together in a single knot.
9. There are frilly appendages flanking the mouths of some types of jellyfish are called oral arms. To recreate these, unravel a few pieces of yarn that hang close to the center of the bunch.
10. If you are doing the glow-in-the-dark option, allow your jellyfish creation to charge in the sun or a bright light for at least 30 minutes (longer charge gives you a longer glow). Then go to a dark room, preferably with no windows like a bathroom or laundry room and turn off the lights and enjoy its luminous glow!

Fun Facts:

1. Did you know that Jellyfish are almost completely comprised of water? *About 5% percent of jellyfish bodies are made of structural proteins, muscles, and nerve cells, while the remaining 95% is water. Human bodies, by comparison, are up to 60% water.*
2. What's in a name? *A group of jellyfish can go by three different names. Groups of animals typically have their own names: A group of cows is a herd, for example, while many fish swimming together are a school. Jellyfish groups can go by three different names. A collection of jellyfish are called a "bloom," "smack," or "swarm."*

3. What do you mean Jellyfish aren't fish at all? *Despite their name, jellyfish aren't really a type of fish. Fish are vertebrates that live in water and breathe through their gills. Jellyfish, on the other hand, are invertebrates, meaning they have no backbone and they absorb oxygen from water through membranes.*
4. Astronaut Jellyfish? *Believe it or not, over 60,000 jellyfish have been in space. In 1991, over 2,000 jellyfish polyps were blasted into space to test how they reacted to the lack of gravity. Those jellyfish reproduced in space, creating over 60,000 jellies, but the space-bred jellies weren't able to function properly when they returned to Earth.*
5. Did you know that although they don't make jelly, there are over 25 types of edible jellyfish? *In some countries, jellyfish can be a delicacy. They're typically found in salads or pickled, and some people say they have salty taste and a similar consistency to noodles.*

Fun Things To Try:

1. Color Match Challenge - Have your kids find a picture of their favorite jellyfish and then have them try to paint them as they appear in nature.
2. The New Jellyfish Challenge – Using what you have learned, have your kiddos invent their own unique jellyfish by changing the placement of the tentacles, using more bowls, etc.