

Create an Inflatable Sculpture with artist Nicole Banowetz

Materials List

Plastic Bags (Number 2)
Scissors
Large sheets of paper (or parchment paper, paper grocery bags)
Pencil
Iron
Permanent Markers
Fan
packaging tape(optional)
card stock(optional)

Workspace

A nice big table with a place you can plug in an iron. Make sure your table won't be damaged by the heat of an iron(most classroom tables will be fine). If you are worried about your surface you can iron on a towel or an ironing board.

Steps

1. Gather materials and get ready to follow along with the instructional video.
2. Decide what you want to make as your inflatable creation. The head of some sort of creature is a good choice.
3. Start by drawing a 10 to 14 inch line at the bottom of the paper which will be where the sculpture attaches to the fan.
4. Draw your shape and make sure the main shape and details are large.
5. Once you make all the details large enough for air to inflate them then you can cut out the pattern.
6. Prepare the plastic bags by cutting off the bottoms and the handles. Then cut them open to lay flat.
7. Now lay out your pattern and calculate how many bags you need. Remember 4, 6 or 8 layers will be good, but I suggest 6 for this project. Also you will need 2 finished sheets of plastic so you have one for each side.
8. Once you have layered your bags so that there is overlap you can iron them together.
 - Put the iron on a synthetic setting and test it(all irons are a little different)
 - Make sure to iron the bags between pieces of paper.
 - Keep the iron moving so you do not melt the bags together
 - Iron all of the areas
 - Once you have ironed all over flip the bags over so you iron both sides
 - Work in an area with good ventilation or wear a mask.

9. Lay your pattern on the bags and outline it with a permanent marker. Do this on both sheets.
10. Cut on the inside of your marker line to cut out your shapes.
11. Stack your two pieces together and fuse about a quarter of an inch around all the edges except the opening for the fan.
12. Attach your sculpture to the fan with packaging tape or hold it in place to inflate.

Create something larger

You can now use what you have learned to make a more complicated sculpture. Follow the same steps as above but use more pattern making techniques to make the sculpture larger or more complex.

Main pattern making techniques (easier to harder)

1. Blow up a 2 D design like a pillow.
2. Add inserts to make a 2 D design more 3 D.
3. Break apart a geometric shape into plains.
4. Break apart organic shapes into plains.
5. Put all these techniques together to make complex forms. Break your design into parts and create air openings, and air chambers to connect all the elements together.

Resources for geometric patterns online (or just google the specific pattern you need)

<https://mathgeekmama.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Geometric-Nets-Printable-Pack.pdf>

<https://www.annwoodhandmade.com/sphere-template/>