

Day 1 Craft

Amate (a-MAHT-ay) Painting

Craft Connection:

Amate is a traditional type of paper made from tree bark. The paper has been made since the first century. Nahua artists in Guerrero, Mexico, have revived this ancient practice by using the paper for a traditional style of painting also called amate.

Materials needed:

- Brown paper bags cut into rectangles
- Paint
- Paint brushes
- Black markers

Directions:

- 1) Start by showing some real amate paintings. A quick internet search will give you lots of options. Notice some of the common images in the paintings, such as birds, flowers and landscapes. Note how the paintings use bright colors within thick black lines and often lack any background color.
- 2) Crush up and smooth the paper-bag rectangles several times to get a softened, broken-down appearance similar to that of amate paper. Note: Younger kids can skip this step and paint on the flat bag, but crushing the bag is pretty fun.
- 3) Using a black marker, draw flowers, birds, animals or landscapes on the bag. Note: For younger kids, an adult can either pre-draw images or help kids draw.
- 4) Use brightly colored paint to fill in the drawings. Consider displaying the paintings in a window to brighten the day of people passing by. Or, combine the paintings with the dove craft for Day 5 to send a gift to neighbors or friends.

