

LEARNING RESOURCE

MOSS GRAFFITI

MATERIALS

- One or two clumps (approx. 50g) of moss collected from the garden.
- 1 cup of plain yoghurt
- A few pipettes of water
- 1/2 tsp. sugar

PREPERATION

- None required.

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Find some moss! You can gather moss from pavements, damp bricks, rooftops etc. Moss from the woods doesn't work as well and should be left in the wild.
2. Preparing the moss paint. Break the moss apart into small, manageable pieces, weigh approximately 50g and place in a blender.
3. Add the yoghurt, water and sugar. Blend the mixture until completely smooth with a paint-like texture. You don't want it to be too thin as it will drip and run down the surface you want to paint; corn syrup can be added if necessary to thicken up the mixture. You can also add a teaspoon of moisture retention beads to thicken the liquid.
4. Pour mixture from the blender to a bucket or cup. Whizz around but do not liquefy it because the moss cells must stay intact.

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5. Use a paintbrush to apply the moss-paint to the surface on which you wish your design to grow. (brick walls work well!) If possible, check back weekly to either spray the design with water (to encourage moss growth, or apply more moss-paint.

EXTENTSION

- What are the perfect conditions that your moss graffiti will need to grow?
- Can you make a diary to show how your moss graffiti develops over time?
- Try painting the moss paint on different surfaces and compare the growth, why does a brick wall work so well?
- Graffiti is a controversial subject, do you think it's a good idea or not? Can you write down an argument for or against it that can be used in a debate?

MOSS GRAFFITI SCIENCE TREND - HOW DOES IT WORK?

As people become more eco-friendly and environmentally aware, the idea of making living, breathing graffiti has become an exciting new trend. Also called eco-graffiti or green graffiti, moss graffiti replaces spray paint, paint-markers or other such toxic chemicals and paints with an eco-friendly moss 'paint' that can grow on its own after application.

Moss is a tiny plant that grows in clumps. Moss naturally grows in moist, shady spots. Because of this natural preference, keeping the moss moist with a spray bottle is really important. Moss also likes to grow in acidic soil which is why we add the yoghurt to the mixture, once moss growth has established it will spread across any surface and come back year on year.