

# WET ELBOWS



## Discussion

1. Discuss how paper is made up of small pieces of wood, called *fibers or cells*. We use paper every day, so much, that we don't realize how important it is for all of us. Some examples of paper products are the following:

books, grocery bags, toilet paper, notebooks, and wrapping paper

2. Ask the children what happens to their old homework, see what types of responses you receive from them. Explain that paper is the most recycled material of all the materials collected for recycling.

3. Explain that the advantage of wood for paper is that it has the ability to be recycled and reused again and again. Let's see how you can make your very own paper!

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This activity shows how to make a piece of paper using wood fibers and water, called a pulp slurry. It uses recycled wood pulp.

## Materials

Wood pulp or small, ripped pieces of old paper like paper towels (8 sheets) or newspaper (3-4 pages)

Water

Large tub (6" or more deep, 1' square or bigger)

Cookie cutters

Plastic bag

Glitter, confetti, or dried leaves, flowers, seeds, etc.

Screen (window screen)

Old fashioned wringer or Rolling pin

2 sheets of felt

Empty yogurt container

Table to work on

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Place a handful of wood pulp in the tub, cover with water, stir the mixture to hydrate the pulp (you must use a blender if you are using paper towels or newspaper). You can put glitter or confetti in the water if you like.
2. Place a cookie cutter on a screen, and hold the screen over the tub of water and pulp.
3. Scoop up water and wood pulp in the yogurt container.
4. Pour the pulp slurry into the center of the cookie cutter. Make sure to get about 1/4 inch of pulp evenly distributed in the cookie cutter.
5. Allow the excess water to drip out of the screen and gently push down to hasten draining.
6. Carefully remove the cookie cutter.
7. Place a sheet of plastic (like a plastic baggie) on top of the pulp on the screen.
8. Flip the screen over, while holding the plastic and pulp sheet in hand (teacher's assistance needed).
9. Remove the screen, and hold the plastic and wood pulp sheet in your hand.
10. Remove the plastic from the pulp and hold the pulp sheet in the other hand.
11. Put the pulp sheet between 2 sheets of felt.
12. Run the felt and paper sheet assembly through the wringer or roll out the water with the rolling pin.
13. Allow the paper sheet to dry over night between 2 sheets of plastic with a couple books on top for pressure.
14. Trim edges with scissors if you like.

A more thorough description of making paper is attached at the back of this document.