

Reuse Markers to Create Liquid Watercolors

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Take the reuse challenge with this colorful activity! Do you have some markers that have dried out? Don't throw them away; reuse them to make liquid watercolors! All you need are the dried-up markers, jars, and water. It's that simple — and it provides young artists with a colorful, upcycled medium for their creative endeavors.

What You Need:

- Markers
- Jars with their lids
- Water
- Large measuring cup
- Paintbrushes
- Paper for painting
- Labels for the jars (optional)



What You Do:

1. Gather your markers and separate them by color.
2. Place the markers tip-down into jars by color, ensuring that the marker tips are inside the jar. Use larger jars for the colors that have more markers.
3. Use a measuring cup with a spout to pour water into each of the jars. Add more or less water depending on how concentrated you want the color to be.
4. Observe how the ink seeps from the markers and diffuses throughout the water. What are you noticing? What's happening to the water? Is the color of the water what you expected?
5. Leave the markers soaking overnight. The next day, carefully stir the liquid with the markers and make observations about what you see. After a night of soaking, the color should be completely diffused throughout the water. What's happening to the water? What do you notice is on the bottom? Sometimes, the ink will sink to the bottom, depending on how many markers are in the jar.
6. Paint a picture using the liquid watercolor paint. As you paint, make observations about the watercolor paint:
 - Are the colors as dark or vibrant as you imagined they would be? Are there colors you wish you had?
 - Are there colors we can mix to make a new color?
 - How is the watercolor paint the same or different from the paint you usually use?
7. Label the jars, listing the color and making sure to write that it is watercolor paint. This label will help prevent accidental ingestion.
8. Store leftover liquid paint at room temperature in the same jars you used for the activity. Firmly place the lid on each jar to keep the paint fresh and prevent spillage.

This activity is great for teaching your children to reuse as many materials as they can. Upcycling is often good for the environment, and it shows children that they be resourceful with different materials. If you're ever in a pinch and want to add interest to your child's art projects, this activity offers a colorful, thoughtful touch.

Note: Just as drawing with markers can leave some staining, this liquid watercolor can stain clothes.

** Don't forget to send us photos of your projects! vp@bgcclifton.org **