Seal Spud Stamp Art

WhaleTimes

ACTIVITY: Students create underwater scene using stamps carved from potatoes.

GRADE LEVEL(S): K to 12th

20 minutes

DISCIPLINES: Science, visual arts

OBJECTIVES: Students will be able to:
- describe and discuss elephant seals' ocean habitats
- discuss how elephant seals spend time nearshore in kelp forests and far out at sea, diving in deep water for food
- create a visual example of diving elephant seals

MATERIALS:
- Idaho or baking potatoes (pre-cut in to stamps)
- construction or art paper
- tempera paint (child safe): tan or light brown, green, and other colors as desired
- sponges (to ink stamps)
- plastic plate or bowl to hold sponges
- paper towels

OPTIONAL:
- paintable book bag or t-shirt
- fabric paint (child safe)

Spud stamp preparation: (To be used by adults only):
- large knife
- paring knife or plastic knife
- small metal spoon
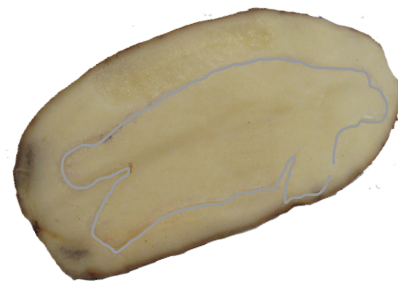- large bowl(s)
- cold or ice water

NOTES:

For younger students, rather than painting the stamp, we use the kitchen sponge to "ink" the stamp. This makes it quicker, easier, and a bit neater. Dip or pour the paint on to the sponge, then spread to even out. Place sponges on plastic plate or in plastic bowl. Re-ink (paint) sponges when needed. Have sponges ready with different paint colors.

Preparation:

Pre-carve stamps. Cut as many stamps as needed. Stamps can be prepared a day or two in advance and stored in water in the refrigerator. Dry with towel before use.

Step 1:   Cut potato in half lengthwise.

Step 2:   Draw seal (or other) shape in to potato with plastic knife. Retrace outline by gently cutting into potato about 1/4 inch.

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Step 3: Carve or scoop out potato using spoon or paring knife, or plastic knife.

Step 4: Store carved (or uncarved cut) potatoes in cold water in

Step 5: Repeat Steps 1 to 4 to make other seal stamps, seaweed, or other animals such as fish.

WHAT TO DO:

Step 1: Gently press stamp onto sponge to ink the stamp.

Step 2: Stamp one or more seals on to art paper.

Step 3: Repeat Steps 1 and 2 with other stamps to create underwater scene.

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