



# HOW TO MAKE ART WITH SNAILS



## A fun science activity that brings kids out of their shell

Have you been wondering what to do with all of those snails in your backyard? Are you looking for a great activity for your kids that combines science and art? Then this is the project you've been looking for!

Gather some backyard snails, place them on drops of food coloring and watch as they scoot around and make interesting designs with their trails. When you're done your child will have a beautiful, unique piece of art. This is an easy project – the only hard part will be convincing your kids not to keep them as pets.

### GATHER THIS:

- Snails! (Snails are nocturnal, so you may have to gather them at night)
- White cardstock or heavy paper
- Food coloring in various colors or beet juice

### THEN DO THIS:

1. Place your paper on a table or other flat surface.
2. Place a few drops of food coloring or beet juice on the paper.
3. Gently place a snail in front of – or on top of – the drop of food coloring. Remember to pick up the snails only by their shell, and avoid touching their bodies (the soft part).
4. Add more drops of food coloring and more snails to your paper. (Don't let it get too crowded, though!)
5. Sit back and watch your snails turn into little Michelangelos!
6. When your masterpiece is done, let it dry in the sun. Return the snails to your garden – they have other jobs to do!

### ASK THIS:

What do you notice about the snail's shell?

### WHAT IS HAPPENING?

The food coloring disburse in the snail's mucus just as it does in water. As the snail secretes more mucus and moves the color stains the paper.

### WHAT THIS TEACHES:

Skills: Inquiry, observation, outdoor exploration, color mixing  
Themes: Biodiversity, appreciation of the natural world