

# Clay Landscape

Landscape and other related art (seascapes, riverscapes, cityscapes, and so on) represent many of the illustrations or paintings of outdoor scenery. Natural in setting, landscapes often focus on features such as mountains, trees, plants, or rivers. This environment-oriented content makes for an excellent way to introduce your child to the artistic process.

In this activity, invite your child to capture the world around her with this outdoor scene clay scape that will let her explore clay in a very different way than what she may be familiar with. This activity encourages and supports creative development and critical thinking skills.

## What You Need:

- Sturdy paper background such as cardboard or a side of a recycled box
- Modeling clay in a variety of natural colors like blue, brown, green, yellow, and white
- Household objects to be used as clay tools like popsicle sticks, plastic spoons, or pencils sides
- Pencil



## What to Do:

1. Ask your child to find an interesting outdoor scene. This can be your yard, the park, a photograph from a book, an illustration or painting, or a vacation photo.
2. Using a pencil, encourage your child to sketch the landscape onto the cardboard background. This can be an excellent opportunity to discuss art vocabulary such as perspective, horizon line, shape, foreground, middle ground, and background.
3. Give your child an assortment of clay colors. Have her apply the clay over her landscape sketch filling in as much of the cardboard as desired. This should be done by blending and smoothing a thin layer of clay over the surface of the cardboard. She will essentially be "painting" the surface of the cardboard with the clay. Clay colors may be layered together to form new shades. Each landscape object should be a distinct color. For example, a tree should be a different color than a mountain against it in the background.
4. Finally, she'll use the homemade clay tools to create interesting textures or patterns in the landscape and finish off the scene by smoothing any rough edges and adding in details.

The finished product will look more like paint than clay. It may have an impressionist style quality to it. Try adding this activity to a post-museum-visit discussion or when reading a book about artists. This is a great activity for your child to do outside over the summer to keep her mind active those creative faculties fresh!