SOW THE SEEDS OF INSPIRATION

Cultivate a Fantasy Garden

Materials: Duck Tape® rolls, heavy-gauge wire or similar material (pipe cleaners, recycled hangers, floral wire, etc.), wire cutters, scissors, thick Styrofoam

1. Introduce students to the story (and various visual representations) of Through the Looking Glass, and the paintings of Henri Rousseau. Examine their use of oversize, whimsical fantasy gardens to create dramatic imagery.

2. Have students describe and discuss what they see in each example. Ask: What are the colors, shapes, textures, and various components of the depicted flowers and plants? What makes them fantastical and whimsical, and what effect does this have?

3. Tell students they will create their very own original, wondrous, and exaggerated botanical specimens, completely out of brightly colored and patterned Duck Tape®, for inclusion in a class “garden,” and “planted” in a Duck Tape®–wrapped foam base, window box, or other floral container.

4. Petals and leaves Fold individual strips or sheets of Duck Tape® around single pieces of wire. With scissors, cut and shape petals and leaves as desired.

5. Assemble Attach exposed wire of petals and leaves to stem with more Duck Tape®. Shape finished piece as desired, focusing on creating a unique, fantastical specimen.

6. Display “Plant” ends of all stems into a thick piece of Duck Tape®–covered foam and secure into place with more Duck Tape®. Display as is or place foam inside a window box or other floral container to create a garden.

For advanced students: A large quantity of flowers and plants can be made to embellish and add texture to school-wide projects such as pep rallies, parade floats, dances and proms, or school sporting events. The garden can also be created in conjunction with the “Mural” lesson plan to add depth, dimension, and detail to one or all of the panels.