

Paint with Pine Needles



In late autumn, pine trees and other evergreens prepare for winter. Unlike deciduous trees, most conifers keep their needles all year round. They have a thick, waxy coating, called a cuticle, on their needles that helps them retain water during cold, harsh winters. Evergreen trees also create chemicals called cryoprotectants that lower the freezing temperature of water inside the tree. Any water in the tree is sent out of the tree's cells and into the spaces between the cells. If water freezes inside a cell, this can damage the cell. Combined, these adaptations, along with photosynthesis (on nice days), help evergreen trees survive winter.

Make your own pine needle paint brush

Materials: pine needles, rubber band or string, paper, paint

Directions:

1. Gather old pine needles that have fallen onto the ground beneath a pine tree.
2. Bunch them together to create a brush. You can hold them together at one end with a rubber band or string.
3. Use your pine needle paint brush to paint pictures. You can use the needles to create different textures.
4. Get creative! See what patterns you can create with the pine needles.