

ArtStream

Written Instructional Guide



Building Worlds with Paper

For 6-8 Students

With Teaching Artist Victoria Wills

Lesson 1: Create a Diorama Stage

Introduction

Welcome to Building Worlds With a Paper Diorama. Get ready to combine your creativity, with new art making skills. You will add your knowledge of the world's major biomes to build a cardboard model of your own imagined world, complete with plants and animals.



Materials

For this lesson you will need:

- One empty cereal box
- 4 pieces of paper— sketch or printer paper
- Graphite pencil
- Drawing materials— colored pencils, markers, or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue stick, tape, or stapler



Let's get started with a moment of gentle movement

- Be seated in a comfortable place.
- Imagine you have a bucket of paint at each side. You choose the colors.
- Dip one hand into a bucket of paint.
Explore shapes that we can trace in the air.
- Start with painting lines of color.
- How many different directions can your lines travel?
- Where can you draw a zig-zag line?



Gentle Movement (*continued*)

- Let that hand rest and dip the other hand in paint.
- With this hand, paint curved lines and spirals. Try to paint a curved rainbow shape over your head
- What curved lines can you paint at your sides?
- Let's remember the space behind us. Can you paint any spiral shapes in the space behind you?



Gentle Movement (*continued*)

- Rub your hands together as if you're washing off all the paint.
- Rub off your arms, up to your elbows.
- Make sure to rub the paint off that may have splashed on your shoulders too.
- Shake your hands dry.

Stretching and moving helps us relax so that we think more creatively. This is a movement you can do at anytime to help you relax or stretch.

We are warmed up and ready to create.



Step 1: Select Your Biome

Biome: a large naturally occurring community of flora and fauna occupying a major habitat

- You will select a biome to represent on your diorama.

Refer to the World's Major biomes Guide on the next slide to select a biome you'd like to represent with your diorama.



World's Major Biomes Guide

- **Tropical Rainforest**-Warm and rainy all year long. Huge level of diversity among plants and animals.
- **Temperate Forest**-Four distinct seasons. Trees shed their leaves.
- **Desert**-The hottest biome. Vast temperature swings. Animals may burrow underground. Life must survive with little water.
- **Tundra**-Flat and cold with low lying plants. Layer of permafrost. Small burrowing mammals. Birds migrate during coldest seasons.
- **Taiga (Boreal Forest)**-Conical shaped evergreens with needles. Animals may grow dense fur or feathers to match the snow.
- **Grassland**-Covered in short to tall grasses. Large grazing mammals usually in herds.
- **Savanna**-Tree studded grasslands. Herding animals have long legs to evade predators. Frequent fires and grazing helps maintain grasses.
- **Fresh water**-Low concentration of salt in the water-includes ponds, streams, lakes, rivers.
- **Marine**- Water has a high concentration of salt. Animals have adapted to live with high levels of salt.



Step 2: Select Your Biome (*continued*)

Once you've selected the biome that represents your world, decide on the distinguishing features that you'll want to show in your diorama with your artwork. Write notes for yourself on a piece of paper. This may include:

- Landscapes
- Large & small plants
- Waterways and water features
- Cloud formations or clear skies



Step 3: Draw the background of your diorama stage

- On a clean piece of paper, use your drawing materials to define the major landforms that define the landscape, such as mountains, volcanoes, plains, hills, waterfalls, glaciers. **This will be the the vertical backdrop of your diorama.**
- Draw in a typical weather pattern that might occur on a day in your world.
- Experiment with different types of lines and shading to add texture and interest to your drawing.



Step 3: Draw the foreground of your diorama stage

- On a clean piece of paper, draw the lower, ground portion of your biome. **This will be the horizontal part of your diorama.**
- Define the outstanding features of your world, demonstrating soil type, rock formations, and bodies of water, if present.
- Experiment with different shades of the same color, blending colors, or layering colors, to give detail and layers of interest to your landscape.



Step 4: Open the cereal box

- Carefully open **both the top and the bottom flaps** of the cereal box.
- You can gently peel the box open or you can gently slide a scissors along the seal to open the box.



Step 4: Open the cereal box (continued)

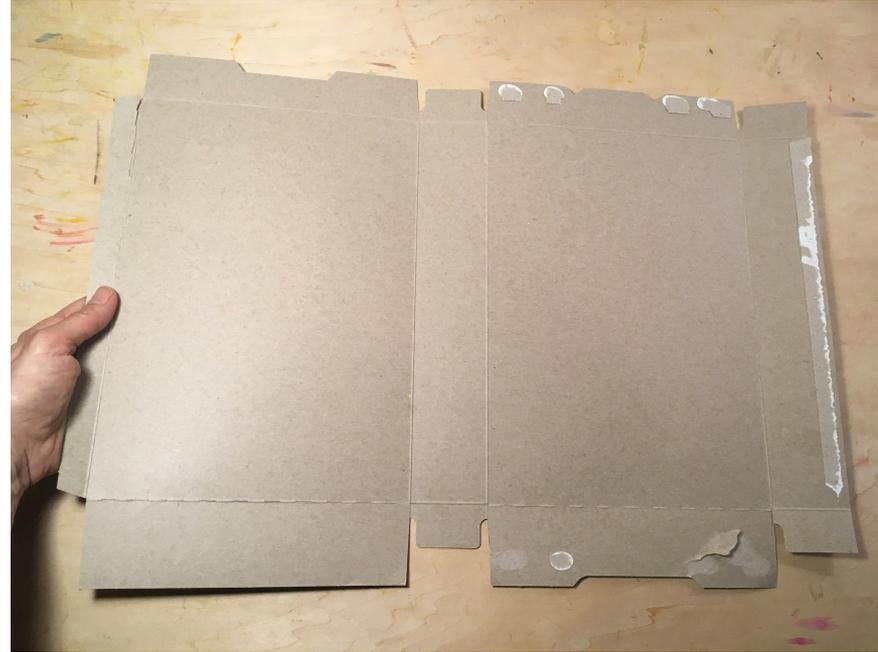
- Locate the seam along the **long side** of the box.
- Gently open up the seam in the same way you opened the box top and bottom.



Step 5: Lay the cereal box flat

Now you have your open box to make your diorama stage from!

- Open out the entire box and lay it flat on your work surface, with the clean cardboard surface facing up.



Step 6: Cut and prepare the cereal box

- Locate the two folded flaps at the **ends** of the box.
- Cut along the fold line to remove the **wider folded flap**.
- Save these pieces for the next step.



Step 7: Fold the removed flaps

- Fold each of the removed cereal box flaps in half.
- These folds will serve as cutting guides for the next step.



Step 8: Cut the removed flaps in half

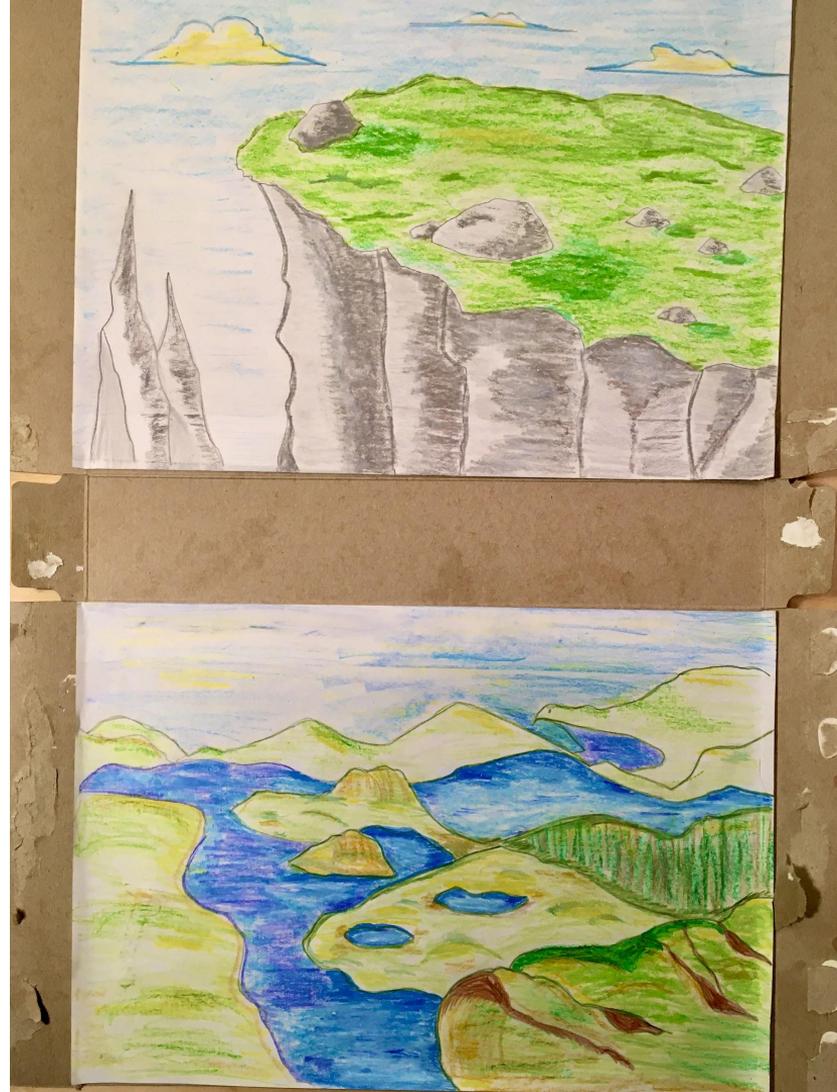
- Using the crease you folded into the flaps as a guide, cut the flap to make two equally sized pieces.
- We will call these the **support braces**.
- Set aside the **support braces** for later when you assemble the diorama stage.



Step 9: Attach the background and foreground drawings to the box

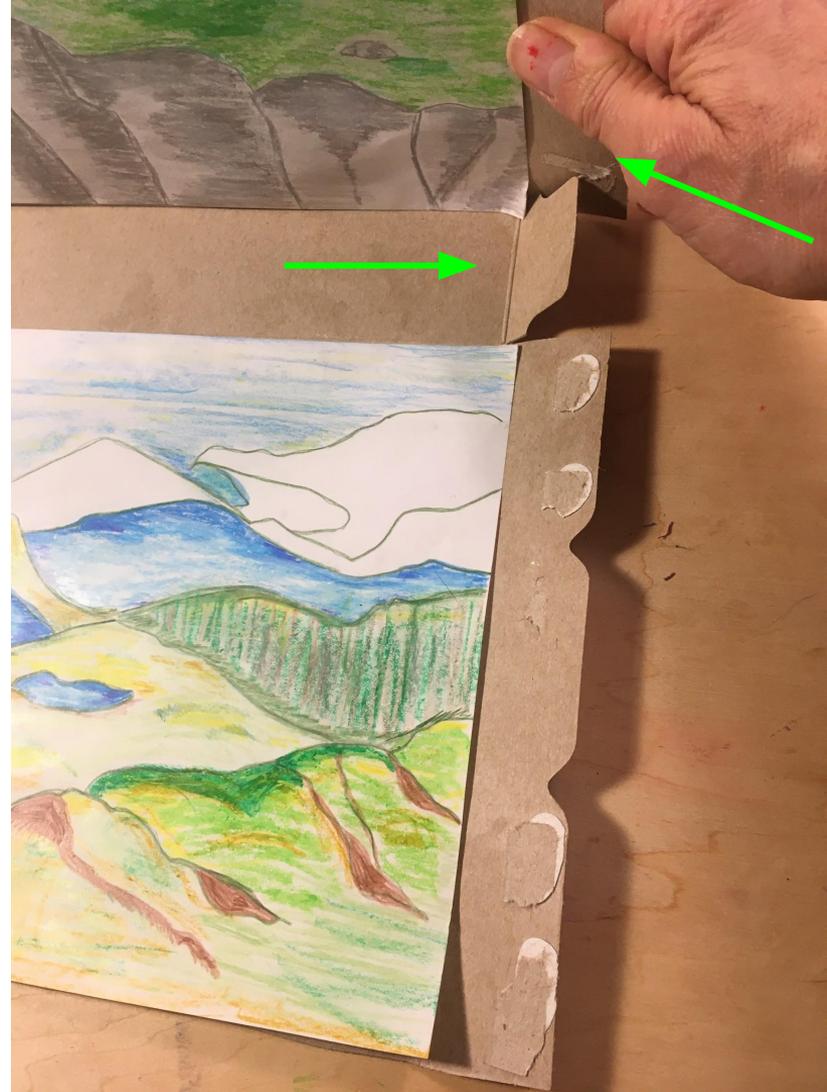
- Lay your unfolded box vertically (see *picture*).
- Attach the background to the top large rectangular space.
- Attach the foreground drawing to the bottom large rectangular space.

You can use glue, tape, or stapler to do this.



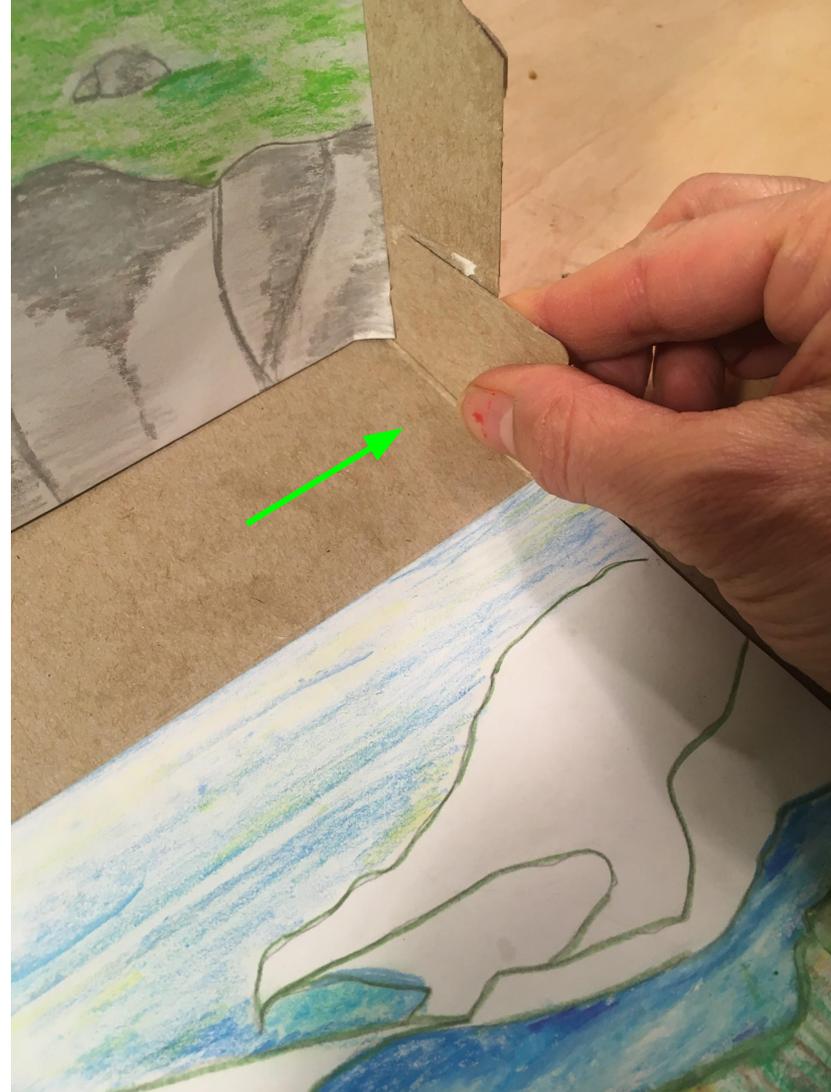
Step 10: Assemble the diorama stage

- Fold up the background panel so your box makes an “L”, the foreground staying flat on the work surface.
- Fold the small flaps upward to meet the long vertical side flaps on the box (see *arrows in picture*).



Step 10: Assemble the diorama stage (*continued*)

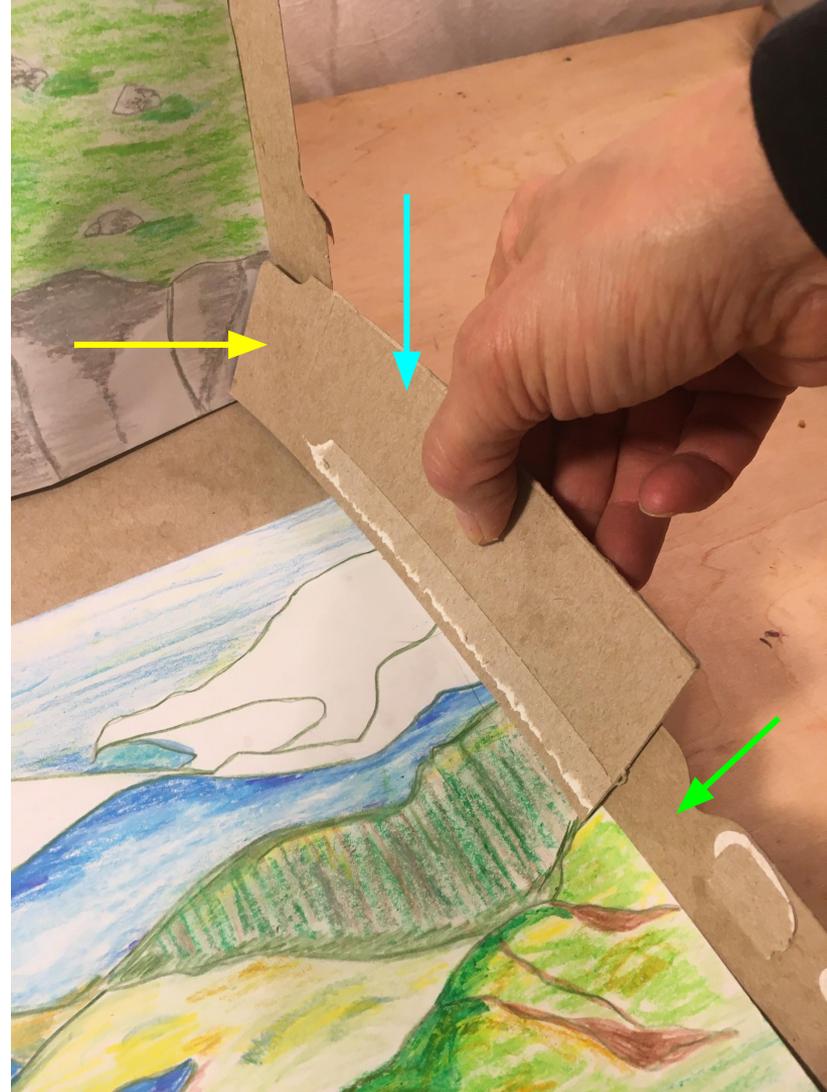
- Attach the small flaps to the longer vertical side flaps with glue, tape or staples (*see arrow in picture*).



Step 11: Attach support braces

Glue, tape, or staple the two small **support braces** you'd made earlier to add stability (see *blue arrow*). These braces will connect the short side flaps you just used to secure the background upright (see *yellow arrow*) with the longer side flaps connected to the foreground panel (see *green arrow*).

Your diorama stage is now complete!



Reflective Moment

- Think back on the steps you followed to create the cardboard diorama stage today.
- Take a moment to place your hands in your lap, and lengthen your back.
- Reflect on one choice you made in crafting your cardboard diorama stage that you feel especially proud of and congratulate yourself on your effort.
- Take a deep breath in, let it out.



Thank you!

I'm so glad you joined in today
to create your cardboard
diorama stage

- In the next lesson we will create a free-standing creature to add to the diorama stage.
- What other 3D cardboard structures you could you make?
- Use the skills you learned today to keep creating!