

# AQUARIUM ARCHITECTS

## LEARN ABOUT

Children develop vocabulary as they describe their work decorating an aquarium.

## WHAT YOU'LL NEED

A copy of *Not Norman: A Goldfish Story*, by Kelly Bennett | Butcher paper | Markers and/or crayons | Cups or small containers for crayons and markers | Tissue paper, cut into small pieces | Pictures of aquarium accessories, such as rocks, plants, etc. from the Internet or magazines | Glue | Scissors

NOTE: This activity can be customized using different supplies.

## WHAT YOU'LL DO

**Preparation:** Using a black marker, draw a giant fishbowl on the butcher paper. | Using the Internet or magazines, select and cut out a variety of items found in aquariums (plants, rocks, coral, sunken ships, treasure chests, etc.). | Cut tissue paper into small pieces. | Set up materials to ensure they are accessible to children.

**Introduction:** Show children the last page of the book and explain that Norman lives in a fishbowl full of water. Norman's fishbowl is an aquarium, a place where fish and plants can live. Norman's aquarium is decorated with a treasure chest, plants, and a scuba diver. Explain that people, like the little boy, add small items to aquariums to make them feel more like home for the fish. Let children know that today they will be decorating a giant version of an aquarium, using a variety of materials. Invite children to decorate the aquarium using markers, crayons, and the cut-out items.

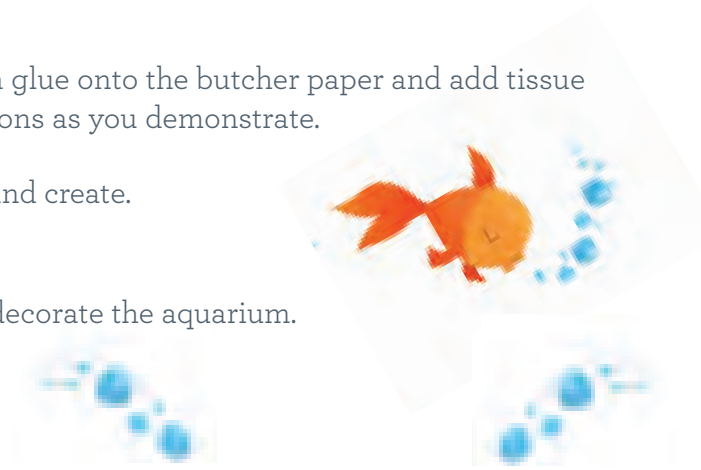
*Not Norman: A Goldfish Story* is a humorous tale about a child who finds a new friend in an unexpected place.

In this activity, children use markers, crayons, and other materials to decorate a paper version of Norman's fishbowl.



## HOW IT'S DONE

- Explain to children that Norman's aquarium has a pretend scuba diver, treasure chest, and underwater plants for decoration. Today, the children will be able to decorate an aquarium using different materials.
- If gluing items onto the paper, demonstrate how to brush glue onto the butcher paper and add tissue paper pieces or other items. Be sure to describe your actions as you demonstrate.
- Encourage children to use different colors as they color and create.
- Discuss what colors and items the children are using to decorate the aquarium.
- If needed, help children to use the materials.
- Invite children to write their names on the paper with a crayon or marker. Provide help writing if requested. Accept scribble marks, if these are used.
- Conclude this activity by talking about the many different items that children have drawn or added to the aquarium.



## VOCABULARY LIST

Use these words and explanations in your conversations with children:

**aquarium** | a container in which fish and other water animals and plants can live

**coral** | a small, colorful sea animal that stays in one place throughout their adult lives

**fish** | an animal that lives in water, breathes with gills, and usually has fins and scales

**seaweed** | a type of plant that grows in the sea

**treasure chest** | a large box that is filled with gold, silver, and jewels

## TALKING TIPS

Talk with children about what they are drawing or adding to the aquarium. Ask children to describe what they are doing and explain what they are creating.

