



PAPIER MACHE MODEL OF A RIVER VALLEY

You only have to listen to childrens' conversation around a model to know what a useful tool it can be in extending their experience of the outdoors. The process of making one is extremely valuable too and involves the children in examining maps and photos in a very focused way. This is just one method that **RORE** has successfully tried with 8/9 year olds. The heights of the hills can be fairly accurately modeled using papier mache, but the slopes are only estimated. The children can calculate the summits and reflect the closeness of the contour lines and the steepness of the hills in the way they work the material .

Materials: board (choose convenient size to fit your tables and the scale), newspaper, wallpaper paste, masking tape, water based paints, varnish, variety of materials for features (e.g. sponge, match sticks, jinx sticks), glue gun, skewer, saw, O.S. map and aerial photos if possible.

Method: Make two photocopies of the part of the map you want to include and enlarge. Get the children to pick out the features they want to model and to colour them. Stick one photocopy onto the board and discuss the scale. Unless you have enlarged the map considerably the same scale for the height of the hills will be very difficult to work with; it will be too small. We used the scale: 1 km = 16 cm for the horizontal and 100m = 8cm for the vertical (i.e. five times the horizontal).

Stick screwed up pieces of newspaper over the hills, using masking tape. A skewer can be helpful to test the final height of the main hills. Strips of newspaper soaked in wallpaper paste are then placed over the hills to create smooth slopes. Two layers, leaving the model to dry out in between, is sufficient. If features are covered up they can be cut from the second photocopy. For instance the river can be stuck onto the model at a later stage. Children will make suggestions for representing the features. Some may need to be attached before painting. Houses can be sawn from cuboid jinx material, trees made from cut sponges on match sticks, bridges can also be constructed out of match sticks. A glue gun is very helpful here. When everything is painted and stuck on a coat of matt varnish can be painted over to protect the model.