

# Painting a Playground Map

Make sure you have a suitable surface and that it is clean. It is best to have it power washed 1 to 2 days ahead of time, so it has time to dry. At least make sure it is swept clean of dirt, rocks and other loose items.

## Setting up:

- Fill the milk jugs half full with water to use as weights to hold down the stencils and the drop cloth.
- To the side, open a large piece of plastic or drop cloth to act as your paint staging area.
- Put roller covers on the 3" rollers (4 or 5 of them) and the 9" rollers (6 of them).
- Put poles on the 3" rollers.
- Put a liner in each of 7 pans. Use masking tape to tape them to the pan at each end. The tape should go from the liner to the underneath of the pan. (Keeps the liner from blowing out on a windy day and spilling paint.)
- Open a trash bag and anchor it somewhere near the paint area.
- Empty all items from the "wet" plastic tub. This tub will be used to clean rollers, etc. We do NOT clean roller covers, pan liners or paint brushes. They are disposed of after use.

## Locating the map

- It's best to have someone from the school determine where to locate the map. Be sure it is OK before covering up other playground markings (four square, basketball, etc.)
- Unfold and lay the stencils where you want them using the milk jugs to hold them in place. It is critical to orient it correctly, i.e. Canada should be toward the north. Try to have it lay as flat as possible.
- Use the map of North America to help orient Alaska and Hawaii to the mainland as best you can within the space allowed. You will notice Alaska is not to scale.

## Outlining

- For Alaska and the mainland, using white chalk, mark through the holes in the stencil making sure you get each dot.
- For Hawaii, it is easier to paint a "blob of water", and then paint the islands on it. So using the stencil as a guide, outline with chalk an area in a similar shape to the islands allowing for an area of water around them about 10"-12". Don't worry about an exact shape, but do try to get the orientation of the islands correct.
- The Great Lakes, New England and the east coast states are small enough that when you lift the stencil it will be very difficult to know which dots are which states. So before removing the stencil, use white chalk to outline these areas. The boot of Louisiana is another tricky area. You can outline any you feel will be confusing.
- Also, before removing the stencil, use chalk to mark where the land and water meet for the oceans and the Gulf of Mexico. Do this for Alaska as well as the mainland.
- If there is room to leave the stencil up for a while, just move it to the side so you can refer to it as needed for questions about which dots are to be connected. If not, after making sure you no longer need it, fold it up **carefully** and return it to the bucket. It is best to fold it in half east to west repeatedly until it is only a foot or so wide. Then fold it in half north to south until it will fit into the bucket. Put Hawaii and Alaska on top.

- Outline an area to paint a white background for the Rotary logo. You can lay the logo stencils down and put masking tape down in a rectangle around them the size you want. You can then paint inside the masked area with white when you're outlining the states.
- Empty several of the milk jugs into the "wet" bucket to use for washing hands, rollers and paint can rim liners. Others can be used for anchoring the paint staging area. Keep one or two to use to clean up spilled paint – hopefully you won't need it! The very last one you empty will be used to rinse out the "wet" bucket after everything is washed up.
- Open the cans of paint for white and light blue. Attach the rim liners to the **inner rims** of the paint cans before stirring or pouring the paint. Stir the paint thoroughly.
- For Hawaii, pour a little of the light blue paint into the middle of the chalked area and using a 9" roller, fill it in. Wrap the roller with a plastic bag to keep it moist as you'll use it again later but not for a while. Once the light blue is dry, lay the stencil down and chalk the dots. You can then outline the islands in white when you outline the other states.
- Pour some white paint in a lined pan (or two) and into a cup (or two). Using the 3" rollers, outline the states with white paint centering the roller over the dots. It is best to work from one direction to the other. We find that it is best to use a brush (with the cup of paint) in parts of the New England area to outline the states. Many of them are tiny and a roller is just too hard to manipulate. When using a brush, paint a line at least 1½ inches wide.
- When you paint the colors, you will overlap onto the white leaving about 1½ - 2 inches of white between the states. So be sure the middle of the line is covered very well. You want the edge of the white to be very neat for the states bordering Canada and Mexico as they will not have any other color overlapping them. This will be the "finished" edge for those states.
- Fill in the rectangle for the logo background using the 3" roller and when it is nearly dry, pick up the masking tape.
- When all states are outlined, remove the roller covers using the plastic bags and discard the covers. Remove the poles and wash the rollers. Put the poles on the 9" rollers. Save at least one of the white paint brushes to use for touching up at the end. Wrap it in a plastic bag to keep it from drying out.

### Painting the colors

- Open the remaining 5 colors one at a time starting with yellow.
- For each color, attach a rim liner to the **inside rim** of the can, then stir thoroughly. Pour paint into the lined pan and into a plastic cup. Assign a team of two volunteers – one will use the 9" roller and pan and the other will use the brush and cup. Using the map color guide, mark each state for that color with a small dab (not too much so it will dry quickly and not be stepped on by others).
- Depending on the skill of the roller person, you may be able to paint the relatively square states with just the roller. Practice inside the state first to learn how the paint oozes from the roller so you can get a nice neat edge. Overlap the white just a little so you can leave about 1½ - 2 inches of white between each state. The brush team member will get the areas that are difficult to get with a roller. If you want, the brush person can outline the state first and then the roller person can fill in. This usually takes longer though.
- **This is critical:** Start in the center with Kansas and work your way to the edges. You may have to wait on other teams to finish their color before you can do your next one. If you fail to follow this guideline you are almost sure to end up with a state you cannot

reach to paint. You can paint a few of the northeast states without blocking others, but the best rule is to paint all states adjoining Kansas before moving to the next tier out. While a team is waiting, they can work on Alaska or Hawaii or the Rotary logo. Or eat donuts and drink coffee!

- Use blue paint for the Rotary logo. Once the white is completely dry, center the Rotary stencil on the background. You may want to use masking tape to hold it down, but be careful it doesn't peel up the white background. Using a stencil brush, dab **small** amounts of paint from the edge toward the center of the space to be painted. This helps keep the paint from seeping under the stencil.
- It's best if only one person handles the cans of paint. If a team needs more paint in their pan or cup, they can ask the paint handler for help. That person can also be assigned clean up duty – to wash the bottom of the shoes (or feet) when people accidentally step in the wet paint. If someone steps in paint, have them stand still, someone will go to them with paper towels to remove as much paint as possible. Another option is to have them remove their shoes until the paint dries.
- Try to keep the pans and cups of paint INSIDE the outline of the map as much as possible. If it spills, it's easier to clean up and paint over it. When it spills outside the outline and can't be covered up, mop up as much as possible with paper towels, then use clean water from one of the spare milk jugs and a wire brush to clean it up. When painting over a spill, if the color spilled is darker than the color you'll paint over it, you may want to paint it white first so the dark color doesn't show through.
- Once all the states are colored in, use the 9" roller you saved from the light blue for Hawaii. Pour light blue in the remaining pan and paint a strip a roller width (9 inches) to designate where the water is along the coastlines of east and west coast and the Gulf of Mexico, as well as around the appropriate sides of Alaska. Note where Canada borders Alaska so you don't paint water there! Same for the borders with Mexico and Canada.
- You may want to let the volunteers put their initials next to the logo, or put a date there using the Sharpie markers in the kit.

### Finishing up

- Wash up all stencil brushes, rollers and rim liners. Please get the paint off of these! Discard all roller covers and 2" paint brushes and any milk jugs that leak. Pack the rollers, pans and wet items back into the wet bucket.
- Pack up the remaining items in the other buckets based on the inventory sheet for each.
- Give the school the box of colored chalk and the CD with the games. The school is welcome to copy the CD and share it as much as they want. You can decide if you want to leave the remaining paint with the school, but it should **not** be returned to DeAnn with the kit.

With proper care this map painting kit should last for many maps. Thank you for taking good care of it and for sharing this fun project with your club and your schools.

Call me if you have questions before or during your project!

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