

The New
Art Gallery
Walsall

Cloud Nine *by Sam Mace*

Observe the sky and create
a cloud diary.



John Constable 'Landscape with Clouds' is a popular oil painting in the Garman Ryan Collection. It is 200 years old!

John Constable observed the sky carefully. He would carry a sketchbook so that he could draw the clouds. He would use these quick drawings later to help him create his paintings.

Materials:

Assorted paper (15cm x 21cm)

A large piece of thick paper or thin card (38cm x 17cm)

Hole punch

Scissors

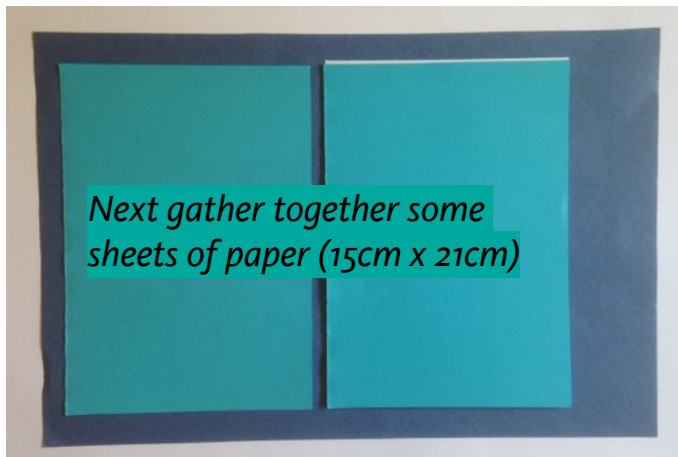
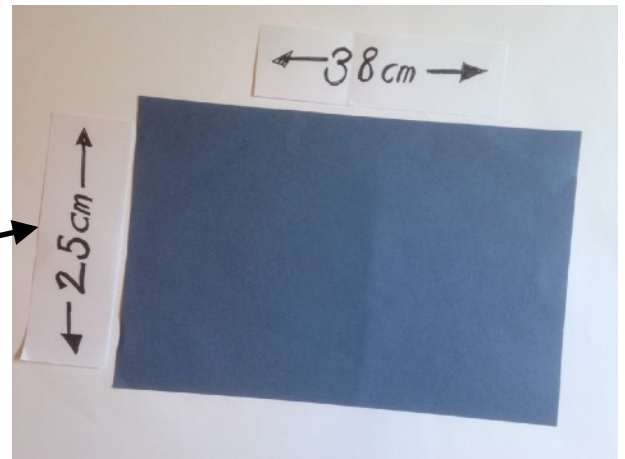
String, yarn or ribbon (140cm)

Various arts materials (pencils, eraser, pen, paint, crayons, pastels, glue)

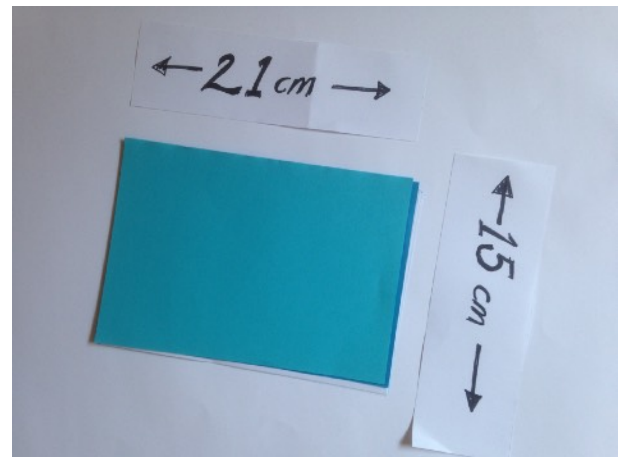
Ruler

To make the sketchbook:

For the cover use a piece of thick paper, thin card or strong fabric (38cm x 25cm)



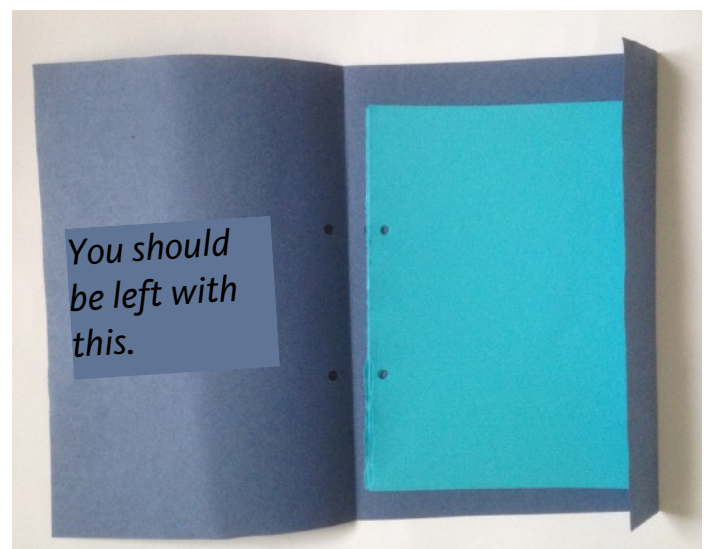
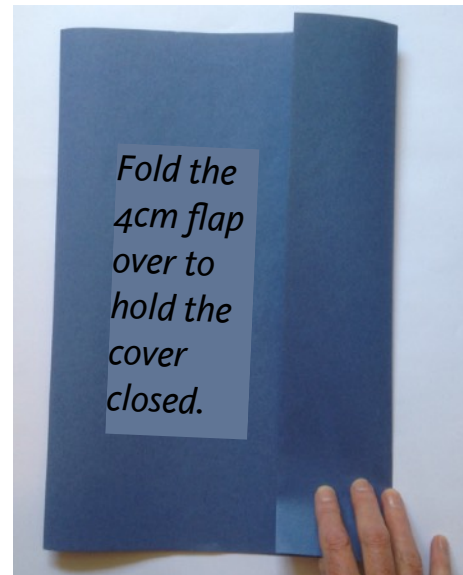
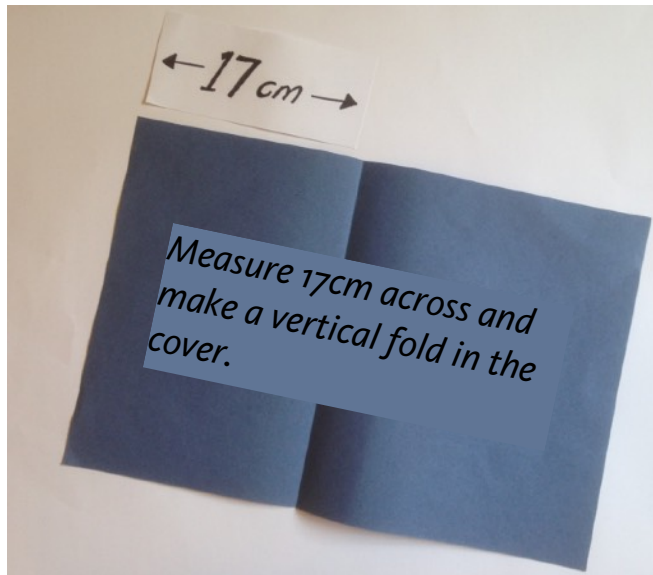
Next gather together some sheets of paper (15cm x 21cm)



Make sure that you can fit 2 pages side by side in the cover with a margin of about 2cm around the edge and enough for a flap along one side (about 4cm)



You can use plain paper or up-cycle scrap paper from the recycling such as brown or patterned envelopes. Try painting a pink sky as a background ready for drawing clouds at sunset or dark grey for stormy dull days.



At this point you can decorate the cover of your cloud diary with collage, tissue paper, crayons, paints, pens or pastels.





Try different designs!

Make a label and put your name and date on it if you wish. The options are endless.

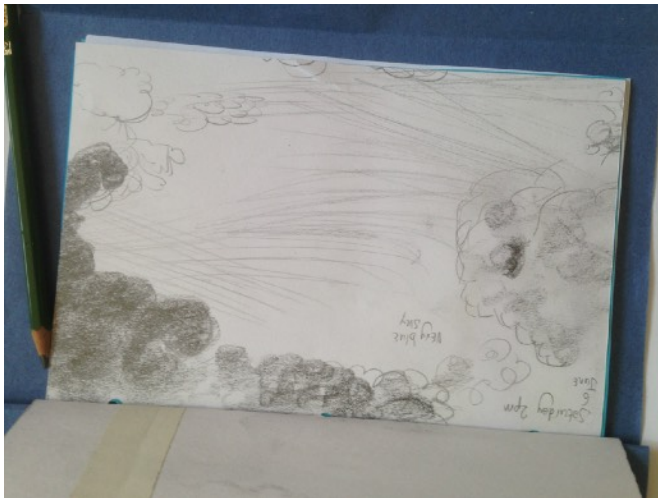
You can use string or ribbon to thread the cover and sketchbook pages together.



You can leave your string longer and wrap it around the diary to hold everything together if you prefer. Tie a small bead or shell on the end of your string to hold it in place.



Now you have made your own cloud diary, observe the sky and fill it with cloud art.
Here are 9 ideas:



1. Be like John Constable and make pencil sketches 'en plein air' – this means 'outdoors' in French and describes the practice of painting and drawing what you see outside on location.

What percentage of the sky is covered in clouds?

2. John Constable made notes in his sketchbooks

Write the time, date, place, weather and other details.

Use an eraser to lighten up darker areas.



3. Put a chart inside the front cover to help you learn the cloud names and go cloudspotting.

4. Make individual cloud studies or draw the whole sky

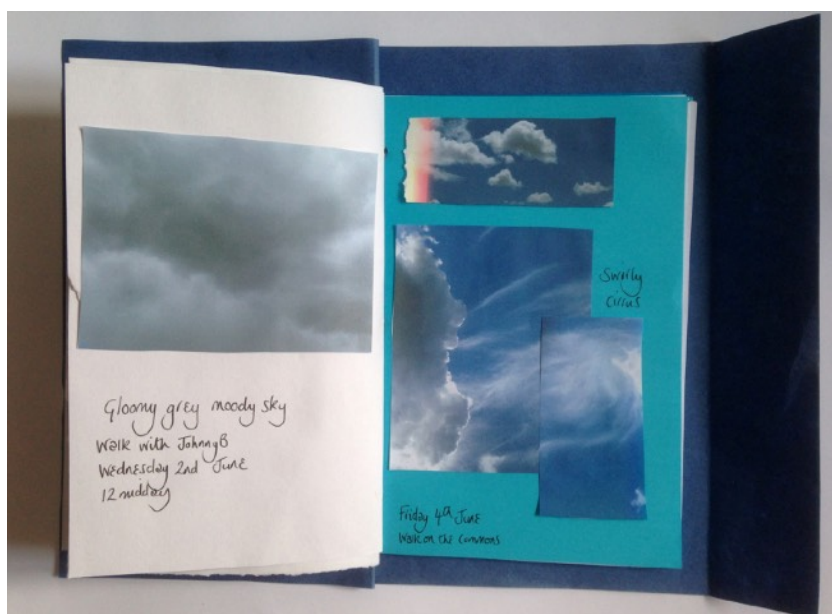
Notice how quickly the clouds change once you start to study them

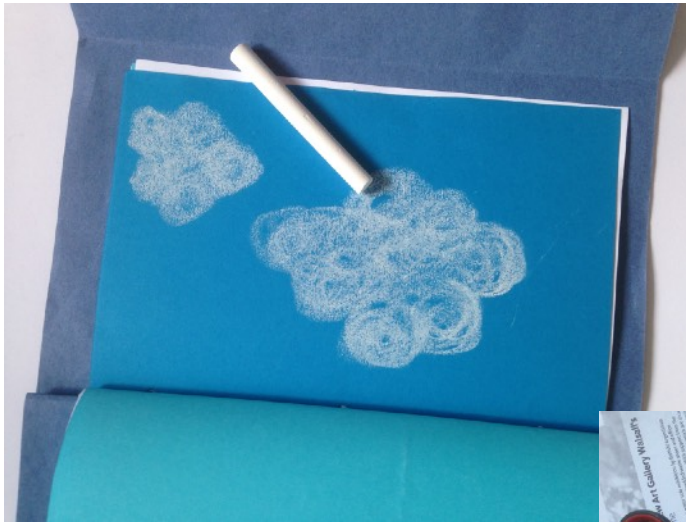
Draw quickly!



5. What shapes do you see in the clouds? A butterfly? A wellington boot? Ice cream? Draw the shapes, cut and stick on blue paper. Leave them white or colour them in.

6. Take photographs. Arrange them into an interesting composition





7. Use sky blue paper for sunny days and white chalk for fluffy cumulus clouds.

8. Up-cycle printed paper by drawing the shape of the clouds that you see on the back and sticking them onto a sky coloured background.



9. Draw clouds using a white wax crayon or wax candle onto white paper. Then paint over in sky colours. This fun technique is called 'wax resist'.

Have fun studying the clouds and keeping your cloud diary!



These children's workshops have been created by our team of artist-educators and are available as films or downloadable worksheets on our website: www.thenewartgallerywalsall.org.uk/families-kids/childrens-online-digital-activities