Suncatchers

Let's create! Have you ever been in a room with a stained glass window and notice how when the sun hits the stained glass just right the light transforms into bright colorful beams? Famous buildings like the Notre Dame in Paris, the Nasir-al-Mulk Mosque in Iran, and the Palau de Musica Catalana in Spain, all have their own epic stained glass windows and skylights to transform standard spaces into kaleidoscopic displays of colorful glittering lights. Stained glass is made up of lots of small, differently-colored pieces of glass, soldered together to create one large piece that usually shows a pattern or picture. Like a colorful puzzle made up of many different pieces to create one large work of art. We can make our own version of stained glass using some clear glue and colorful translucent things like bright leaves and marbles!

How-to video
https://youtu.be/VUtZL_7jAnI

Materials:
- Clear glue
- Mold (like a small tupperware)
- Stained glass pieces AKA translucent things like marbles or smooth sea glass, maybe even thin bright leaves or flower petals.
- Food dye
- Kebab stick, or toothpick, or old fork, or regular stick
- Hole punch
- String/yarn/ribbon

Steps:
1. Prep your space. Since you'll be working with glue and possibly food dye, prep your space to contain your mess and have everything within reach! You can work outside or roll out some old newspaper or cut up a paper bag to set up your work
station inside. Wherever you decide to work, try to have as flat and level workspace as possible so your stained glass pieces stay where you want them to in your glue!

2. **Create a design template.** Stained glass typically a bunch of smaller pieces of colored glass arranged together to make one cohesive design or picture. Play around with your stained glass items and decide how you want to arrange your pieces within your suncatcher so your template is ready to go. Be sure to leave enough space at the top of your design to punch a hole if you plan on hanging your piece.

3. **Pour the first layer of glue.** Once you’ve planned out your design, it's time to make! Very carefully pour your first layer of glue into your mold. You might want a helper to do the pouring or anchor the mold in place. How much glue your pour in depends on how big your mold is, the size of your stained glass pieces, and how much glue you have. In the video, Kelsey used an old takeout container and poured about half an inch of glue for the first layer.

4. **Add your stained glass pieces!** Using your design template as your guide, carefully place your stained glass pieces into the glue. If your stained glass pieces don’t stay where you want them to, it might mean your workspace isn’t level.

5. **If needed, add more glue.** Once everything is arranged in your glue, you might need to add more to cover your stained glass pieces. Gently pour more glue over so it just covers your pieces. You might was to enlist the help of an assistant with a steady hand.

6. **Let dry.** The toughest part- watching glue dry! Dry time will depend on the size of your mold, but it could take up to a week or two. Once dry, your stained glass should look a little shrunken and will pull away from the sides of your mold. It will pop out easily!

7. **Remove from mold and punch hole.** Pop your stained glass out of the mold and admire your artistic genius. Find your designated hole-punch-space and punch a hole! This might be easiest if you enlist the help of a hole-punch-helper AKA an adult.

8. **String.** Using yarn, ribbon, an old shoelace, or whatever you can find, loop your string through your hole punch and tie to secure it to your stained glass, then knot the top ends of the string to create a sturdy loop.

9. **Display!** Hang your stained glass work of art in a sunny window and watch your room transform with rays of colorful light!
Going Further:

***If you want to make a stained glass using food dye, substitute these next steps in for STEP 2 and STEP 4 and skip STEP 5.***

2a. Create a palette! If you’re using liquid food dye, you can dropper the food dye directly into the glue, but if you’re using gel food dye like Kelsey does in the video, dab your food dye colors onto a plate to create a palette in case you want to dip into food dye, swirl into glue, and dip back in.

4a. Marbleize! Once you’ve poured in your layer of glue, dropper in your dye, or dip your kebab stick, toothpick, or old fork into your dye, and swirl your color around to create a marbled effect! Add as many colors as you’d like until your piece is how you’d like it!