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Grade Teacher





Mary Lou's finished necklace is impressive with its boldness of design and its unusual and arresting size, spacing and color

ASBESTOS JEWELRY

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Photographs by Roger Kerkham

EVERY boy and girl loves to "dress up." Give any group of ten-year-olds an attic trunk full of old clothes and they will be happy for hours.

Making "asbestos jewelry" is a project which capitalizes on this childhood interest to motivate a modeling activity which has great creative possibilities for elementary school children.

Unlike many modeling projects, it is clean and simple enough for even the most crowded classroom, and the main ingredient, asbestos powder, can be easily obtained at a reasonable price from any heating supplies dealer.

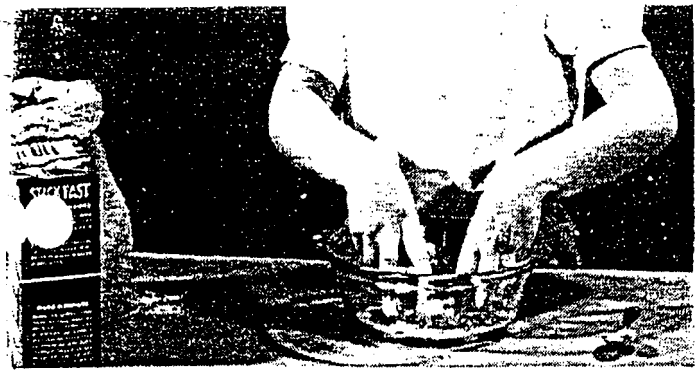
While Mary Lou demonstrates here how she would make a necklace, there are many other fascinating pieces of jewelry she could produce using the same material. Asbestos bracelets, bangles, crowns, earrings, brooches, buckles and pendants make excellent costume jewelry for school plays and pageants. A jewelry-making project can easily be correlated, too, with the study of some ancient civilization, such as the Aztecs, whose art forms included characteristic jewelry.

For most purposes, six parts of asbestos powder, dry mixed with one part of wallpaper paste, and then thoroughly kneaded with a little cold water, will produce a most satisfactory modeling agent. Projects made from this mixture and dried where there is a good circulation of air will become hard and durable. Although seldom necessary for asbestos jewelry, the drying process can be speeded up by placing projects in a moderate oven for a short period.

Children should be encouraged to create their own jewelry designs using the method demonstrated by Mary Lou. After their projects are dry, a little gold and silver paint used along with ordinary school colors will add exciting glamour to each piece. When the painting is finished, the real fun of wearing the jewelry makes a fitting culmination to this useful modeling activity.

MARY LOU SHOWS YOU HOW

Boys and girls are practical souls.
They will like this craft,
because jewelry is useful as a gift
or for personal adornment



Mix six parts of asbestos powder and one part of wallpaper paste with water



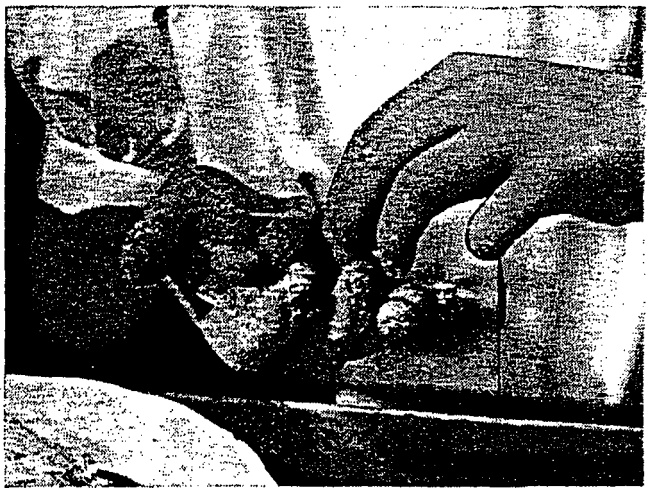
When the asbestos is just right for modeling, Mary Lou rolls out the beads



With a knitting needle a hole for stringing is made in each bead



A cardboard circle is cut out for the foundation of the necklace pendant



A coat of paste secures the decorated beads on pendant surface

When beads and pendant are dry, bright water color and gold paint are added



Finally, Mary Lou strings necklace on thick, bright-colored wool

