An Anchovy Art Activity for Younger Kids

What you need:

- A piece of cardboard backing. A cereal box works well.
- Aluminum foil. Heavy duty if possible.
- Blue tempera paint. You can use different shades for mixing fun.
- Black permanent marker with fine to medium point.
- White glue.
- Optional: Cotton swabs*

*If the artist isn’t so sure about getting messy hands, you can try this project using cotton swabs at first. Some of us need a little time to feel comfortable touching paint.

Slippery Silver Swimmers

1. Cut a square or rectangle piece of cardboard backing. The width should be at least one inch smaller than the width of your foil roll.

2. Cover the cardboard with the foil (shiny side up) and fold the edges to the back. Tape the folded edges to the back side of the cardboard.

3. Put down some newspaper or paper bags to create a work space that is OK to get messy. Squirt paint onto the foil. Use your fingers or cotton swabs to mix and spread the paint. Play with making patterns and swirls as long as you like!

4. When you are ready for the next step, make a final ocean water pattern and set aside to dry. You can hurry the process along by putting it in the sun, but make sure to add little weights to the edges if it’s a windy day!
5. Tear off about 12” of clean foil and fold it like a fan to make about 6 sections.

6. Use the permanent marker to draw anchovy shapes. They have a long, slim body with a tail and fins. You can make some with open mouths—they may be hungry!

7. Cut out lots and lots of anchovies. They feel safest when they are a part of a large school.

8. Use permanent marker to draw eyes and gills and color in fins if you wish.

9. Glue your school of anchovies to the ocean picture you made. Don’t forget, they like to stick together and swim in the same direction!

About Anchovies in the San Francisco Bay:
- Anchovies that live near San Francisco are called Californian or Northern anchovies.
- They stay together in groups called schools—sometimes thousands of them all together!
- When anchovies get hungry, they swim with their mouths open wide and catch tiny creatures floating by. This is called yawning, because that’s what it looks like they are doing.
- Anchovies are a very important food for many ocean animals including humpback whales, sharks, larger fish and sea birds like pelicans.