

# recycled.

BY **SANDY MCKAY**

197 x 130mm. 132pp paperback  
ISBN 1 877135 49 6 RRP \$14.95

Readership:  
JUNIOR FICTION

*A high-spirited story, playfully told, which includes great recycling tips and startling facts about ecology.*

What is Colin doing scrambling about in the rubbish bin? Has he lost something?

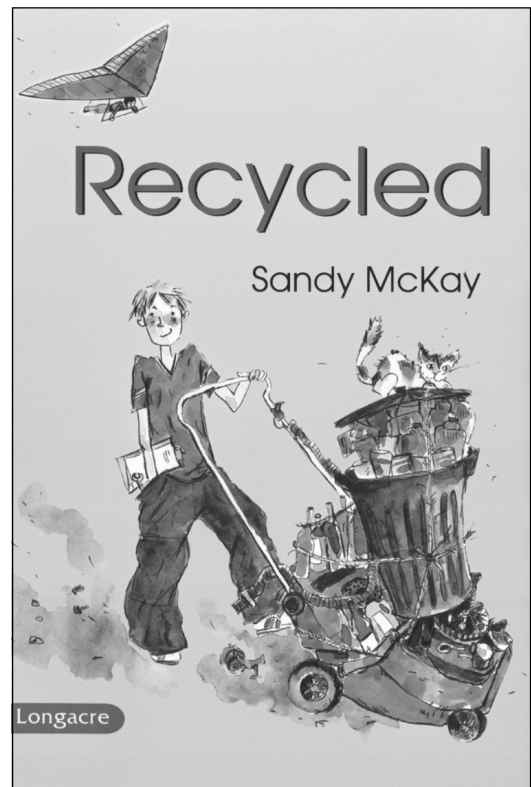
His sister thinks he's lost his marbles, his father thinks he's lost his manners, and his mother – well – she's losing her temper very quickly.

But Colin wants to save the world. And the rubbish bin seems a good place to start. But his family are NO help at all!

*“During a year an average family will probably throw away 1.5 tonnes of rubbish – the equivalent of half the weight of a good-sized elephant.”*

His Dad has no job, his Mum works too hard (and hang-glides in her spare time!) and Colin's sister, Allie, gets a job delivering junk mail.

Saving the world is harder than it looks. And when the Council threatens to close down the local recycling centre – some drastic action is called for . . .



## **RESOURCE KIT** for use in schools

ISBN 1-877135-63-1

**This resource kit contains:**

- **Comment by the author**
- **Comprehension questions and activities; art expression; acting; word games and vocabulary.**

- **Extension topics for discussion and research.**

**Recycled** is published by

**Longacre Press**

PO Box 5340, Dunedin, N.Z.  
Phone (03) 477-2911, Fax (03) 477-7222  
Email: longacre.press@clear.net.nz

Distributed by  
RANDOM HOUSE NZ Ltd,  
PB 102950, North Shore MC, Auckland.  
Phone (09) 444-7197, Fax (09) 444-7524  
Email: customerservice@randomhouse.co.nz

## AUTHOR COMMENT: SANDY MCKAY

---

I always wanted to be a writer of some sort but I thought I should try some 'proper' jobs first. I had a go at lots of things – including waitressing, fruit picking, office working and serving fish and chips. I even went to University and got a degree in Political Studies. Then I opened a fruit shop! After that I spent ten years at home with the kids, writing articles for magazines in my 'spare time'. I didn't make lots of money but I did get lots of writing practice.

I guess I'm basically a nosey sort of person. I like to know what makes people tick. I have the irritating habit of analysing everyone and everything. (Part of my 'Virgo' nature). I ask lots of questions and drive everyone nuts. So writing articles about people for magazines seemed like an interesting thing to do and a good excuse for asking questions.

The trouble was when I wrote articles I wanted to make bits up, put bits in – to make the story funnier or more exciting. That's why I decided to try fiction. When my daughter Meg was born I decided to have a go at writing a book for children during her 'sleep time'. I'd never written anything long like that before and it was scary and fun at the same time. I called the story 'Jump, Jake, Jump'.

I was so excited to have written 15,000 words that I sent the manuscript off immediately. I didn't bother much about rewriting. My own kids loved it so I was sure the publishers would too. While I waited for their verdict I decided to write another one.

I had two characters in my head. Colin, who had already appeared in a short story I'd written and Paddy, who was based on a character I'd interviewed in an article I wrote once for *Reader's Digest*.

I got to wondering what would happen if these two characters got to know each other. Colin and Paddy formed the basis of *Recycled*. I wrote the first draft in long hand on scraps of computer paper. A writer needs a deadline so I set myself the target of writing two chapters per week. I figured a decent sized book would be about 16 chapters long – so it would take me . . . 8 weeks. Once I had Colin's voice in my head the first draft came quickly. That was the easy part. Then I keyed it into the computer, wrote another draft, then another, then another. I could have kept rewriting forever but I knew I'd have to send it off eventually. Eight months later, I did!

By this time my first manuscript had been rejected by several publishers, so I knew the rewriting part was important!

People often ask a writer 'where do your ideas come from?'

Well, sometimes it's like a voice gets in your head and you just have to get it down on paper. Sometimes!

If that doesn't happen you have to pick up your pen and keep writing every day. Eventually something decent will come out. Maybe!

The first way is definitely easier and a lot less



messy. The second way requires loads of discipline and can be frustrating. I usually write a lot of rubbish before I strike something that's okay.

I think writing involves a lot of recycling. Writers recycle experiences constantly. Their own as well as other people's. They recycle lots of other things as well. In *Recycled* I recycled my Dad's lawnmowers, my eldest son's can collection and my youngest son's T-shirt. I also recycled my own secret ambition to hang-glide!

Nothing is wasted when you're a writer, except maybe the odd tree or two. Even if you write something that no one wants to publish you can re-use the material in another story.

Like Colin, I do worry a lot about wasting stuff. I find it hard to throw anything out, so my wardrobe is full of clothes I haven't worn for years. I also have several hundred magazines in our garage that will 'come in handy' one of these days.

Recycling must be in my blood. When we were kids our Dad took us to the tip and we'd usually come home with more stuff than we left home with. Just like Colin's dad!

These days, when I come home from the supermarket with my car full of groceries I know there's a lot of plastic and cardboard that will end up in the rubbish – buried in some landfill somewhere. It's a frightening thought. Colin is very fired up about rubbish and he wants to do something about it. He wants to change the world but first he's got to change the habits of his own family. Not an easy task!

They are busy with their own lives and their own problems and, important as recycling is, life just gets in the way. I reckon we all need a Colin in our family. I know I do. I hope that kids who read *Recycled* will start thinking about rubbish and recycling and try persuading their own families to stop wasting stuff. But apart from all that, I hope they'll enjoy the book and get a laugh out of it too.

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

(These can be used to follow up individual or small group reading.)

### Chapters 1, 2, 3 (pp. 7–26)

1. Colin is the boy telling the story. Name some of his classmates.
2. Why did the class think Mr Read had flipped his lid?
3. List the three important words that were written on the blackboard in big red letters.
4. Burying our rubbish in landfills leads to problems. Name some of them.
5. What happened to make Colin realise 'Planet Earth was going to the dogs' and something had to be done?
6. What was Colin's three point plan to reduce the family's rubbish?
7. How long has Mr Kennedy been unemployed? What was his job? Find out what sort of work that involves.
8. Why does Colin's mum like hang-gliding?
9. Why is Allie on a diet?
10. List some of the things that Colin collects.

#### Activities:

- Paint or draw a picture of Mr Read based on the description on page 8.
- Use an atlas to look up these places: Waihola, Auckland, Invercargill, Hawaii, New York, Giza. Read the chapter quote on page 15 then find a picture of an Egyptian pyramid.
- Take some notes for a week about the rubbish thrown away at your house. What does it reveal about your family lifestyle?
- Byron Banks is an only child. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having brothers and sisters.
- Read page 25 to see who Colin is named after. Do you have the same name as a relative? Find out where your grandparents or great-grandparents lived and what they did.
- Tell the class about your interests or any collections that you have.

### Chapters 4, 5, 6 (pp. 27–42)

1. Name a couple of things that Colin liked about Lizzie Bennett. Is there anything that he didn't like about her?
2. What does Colin mean when he describes his Dad as being 'a bit of a lawnmower buff'?
3. True or False: 'Glass is the only packaging material that is both re-usable and 100 percent recyclable.'
4. What is CRC? (page 34)
5. How many kittens were in the bag? What colour was the one they kept and what did Allie name him? Was everyone in the Kennedy family pleased to have him? Who was and who wasn't?

6. On pages 38–39 several facts and figures are mentioned by the man from Greenpeace. Write down all the ones that are about trees.
7. Colin threw out all his mum's make-up except a bottle from the 'Body Shop'. Why?
8. At the end of chapter 6, Paddy makes a mysterious phone call to Colin. What does he tell him to bring and where does he tell him to wait?

#### Activities:

- Paint or draw a picture of Paddy McTavish based on the description on pages 28–29.
- Tell the class about any pet or animals you have at home. Describe them, explain what you feed them and how you care for them.
- Find out what Greenpeace is and what the organisation does. Do you have a local branch? Has anything important happened in New Zealand that Greenpeace was involved in? Write about it.
- Create a collage, mobile, or small sculpture from bits of scrap paper, junk, plastic, corks etc.
- Plant a tree. Ask at home or at school what sort to get and where the best place to plant it would be.

### Chapters 7, 8, 9 (pp. 43–67)

1. Why was the truck dumping all the chocolate bars?
2. List three things that Colin decided to keep when he was helping people unload their trailers.
3. True or False: Paddy has a wife and six kids.
4. Why did Diana Vial go to visit Paddy?
5. Is Diana Vial rich? How can you tell?
6. What sort of biscuits was Colin's dad baking?
7. Why is Colin's family so uncooperative about recycling?
8. What was Allie's reaction when Colin told her he'd shredded the junk mail she was supposed to deliver?
9. What is the name of the man who signed the letter the Council sent to Paddy?
10. Colin is disappointed in his mum's attitude and tells her so (pp. 66–67). She gets mad at him and nearly snaps his head off. Does she have a point?

#### Activities:

- Paint or draw a picture of Diana Vial based on the description on page 49.
- Arrange a visit to your local rubbish dump or recycling centre. Write a report about what you see; describe how the rubbish is divided up and what happens to it.
- Do the 40 hour famine at school to raise money for 'World Vision'.

- Draw a simple map of your town (or invent a new one). With different colours, mark areas to show 'zones' – residential, commercial, industrial, and rural (i.e. houses, shops and offices, factories, and countryside).
- Colin's mum talks a lot about making a 'commission' on a house sale. What does that mean? As an example, let's say a real estate agent gets 3% commission on a sale. Look at some 'house for sale' advertisements – choose three houses and work out the 'commission' on the price being asked.
- Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of having a 'working mother'.

---

### Chapters 10, 11, 12 (pp. 68–84)

1. Who is President of the Rosewood Residents' Association?
2. What was the compromise Colin and his mum shook hands on?
3. What could the PTA buy if they sold the chocolate as a fundraiser?
4. Why do you think Colin drinks the milk that Paddy gives him even though it is disgusting?
5. How old is Allie?
6. Colin is described as an 'eco-warrior'. Explain what that means.
7. Why did Colin refuse to tell Mr Spittle and his parents where he got the chocolate from?
8. A Hoiho (p. 82) is: (a) a gardening tool, (b) a friendly greeting, or (c) a yellow-eyed penguin.
9. When Paddy met Mr Read did they like each other? What did they have in common?
10. What was important about Saturday May 12th?

#### Activities:

- Design either: (a) a T-shirt with an environmental theme, or (b) a wrapper for a Yum Yum Chocolate Bar, or (c) a 'No Junk Mail Please' sign.
- Find out what you can about Robin Hood (page 72). Write a report about who he was, where he lived, and what he did. Also explain why you think Colin understood how Robin Hood would feel.
- 'Half the world is on a diet and the other half is starving' (page 72). Discuss whether you think this is true and what could be done to make the balance fairer.
- Read the quote at the top of page 82. Are there rain forests in New Zealand? What is the difference between native forests and exotic forests? Divide the trees named below into two lists headed: (a) NZ native (b) introduced.  
Trees: poplar, wattle, kauri, beech, birch, rimu, kowhai, willow, Douglas fir, totara, miro, maple, matai, eucalyptus, tawa, kamahi, radiata pine, oak, elm, kahikatea.

- Look at a New Zealand atlas and write down the names of our National Parks. How many in the North Island and how many in the South? Find out where and when New Zealand's first one was established. Why do we have National Parks?

---

### Chapters 13, 14, 15 (pp. 85–105)

1. What is Allie doing to make Colin think she is behaving weirdly?
2. Whose idea was it to have a family conference? Was the conference a total disaster or did some good come of it?
3. Explain 'vermicomposting' in simpler words.
4. When the cat knocked over the worm farm something of Colin's got broken. What was it?
5. What does Colin secretly admire about his mum?
6. How many tonnes of rubbish will an average family throw away during a year?
7. 'Well, you seem to know your facts, lad', says G. Sparrow to Colin. Read page 100 to see what facts Colin was telling him, then read page 11 and compare the facts as told earlier by Mr Read. What has Colin changed in the re-telling?
8. Paddy gives Colin a pocket knife for his collection. What is the handle made out of? (What does that look like and where does it come from?)

#### Activities:

- Paint or draw a picture of what the view would look like from a hang-glider.
- Discuss the reasons people may have for going on a diet. Is being skinny a good thing? Is it fair to judge people by how they look?
- Colin ranks going to the Council as one of the bravest things he's ever done, alongside hang-gliding and going to a fancy dress party as Queen Victoria. Tell the class about the bravest thing you've ever done, or the bravest thing you've ever seen someone else do.
- Discuss whether it was all right for Colin to forge a note from his mother to get off school, and to lie to Mr Sparrow's secretary about having an appointment.
- Paint or draw a picture of Mr Sparrow in his office based on the descriptions on pages 97–98.

---

### Chapters 16, 17, 18 (pp. 106–126)

1. Allie surprised Colin by offering to help with the protest. What did they make together and what was she better at than him?
2. What food and drink did Colin organise to take to the protest?
3. What were Colin's mum and dad arguing about that made Allie burst into tears?
4. True or False: Colin's mum drives a purple Mazda.

5. Who was Diana Vial's niece? Why was Colin surprised when he found out?
6. What happened to Colin's mum at the protest? Was she injured? Describe how it affected the family.
7. What mark did Colin's group get for their recycling project?
8. What is the 'SNUB' campaign?
9. What turned Allie against the beauty industry?
10. What is the name of Paddy's new workplace and why was Colin putting off visiting him there?
11. Even though Mr Sparrow signed the eviction letter from the Council, he and Paddy became friends. How did this happen?

**Activities:**

- Either: (a) design a protest banner (use paper or cardboard, not your mum's best sheets!)  
or: (b) write your own protest song or poem. (Ask if someone can get a copy of the old Seekers song 'We shall not be moved' to listen to.)
- Imagine you are Colin, in charge of publicity about the demonstration. Write a press release about it to send to the local radio station and newspaper.
- Read page 110, the bit where Byron gets everyone chanting the letters. Try it with your own group of classmates. What other words could you spell out?
- What is a democracy? Apart from New Zealand, name four other democratic countries and find out their leaders' names. What other systems are there for running a country? Write down the names and countries of one king, one queen, one president, one dictator, and one prime minister (they can be alive now, or famous dead ones).
- Colin's mum loves hang-gliding so much that she keeps doing it, even after the accident. It puts her in a good mood and makes her easier to live with. Talk about things that you could do to make yourself feel better if you are grumpy or upset.

**TOPICS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION**

- Should recycling be compulsory so everyone is made to help clean up Planet Earth, or left up to the individual?
- Cellphones: love 'em or hate 'em. Are they more annoying and potentially harmful than practical and useful?
- Does happiness come from how you look? Talk about body image, healthy eating and exercise, personal attitude, making your life interesting.
- Animal welfare: should animals be used for scientific experiments and product testing to make life better for us humans? Do animals have rights or are we superior?
- Bending the rules: is it all right to do something illegal if something important is at stake? Who decides whether it is important? What sort of situations? Are laws and rules always right?
- Getting along together: how can people with different personalities, beliefs and goals live harmoniously? Talk about selfishness and teamwork, communication, cooperation, respecting differences.
- Being unemployed wouldn't be so bad – all that spare time to enjoy! How true is that? Talk about the problems and advantages (don't just think of the money!) of *not* having a job, also from the perspective of *having* a job. Do men and women have different problems and advantages in these situations?

**WORD SEARCH:** Make as many words as you can by using letters from the word **hang-glider**

( Sorry, 'hang' and 'glider' don't count 'cos they're too easy!)

Score a point for each word; 10-point bonus for words of 5 or more letters. 10 words – you're under way! 25 words – you're flying! 40+ words – WOW!

**WORD SCRAMBLES**

- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| 1. What is Colin trying to get his family to do?.....                | <b>NICCELGRY</b>  |
| 2. What job does Mr Read do? .....                                   | <b>RATCHEE</b>    |
| 3. There are 15 of these in the Kennedy's garage. ....               | <b>SLOWRENWAM</b> |
| 4. Colin's mum uses this a lot for her work. ....                    | <b>CHELLONEP</b>  |
| 5. What is Allie trying to burn off on her exercycle? .....          | <b>SOLARICE</b>   |
| 6. A truckload of this was dumped at the Rubbish Rescue Centre. .... | <b>ELOCATCHO</b>  |
| 7. What colour is Diana Vial's lipstick? .....                       | <b>EGROAN</b>     |
| 8. What sort of gas does rotting rubbish generate? .....             | <b>HEANTEM</b>    |
| 9. What instrument does Paddy decide to learn to play? .....         | <b>ILONIV</b>     |
| 10. What do worms make by recycling kitchen scraps? .....            | <b>STOMPOC</b>    |

*Answers to Word Scrambles:*  
 1. RECYCLING 2. TEACHER 3. LAWNMOWERS  
 4. CELLPHONE 5. CALORIES 6. CHOCOLATE  
 7. ORANGE 8. METHANE 9. VIOLIN 10. COMPOST

## VOBABULARY & SPELLING

These are all words from the book. Have a quiz to see if students know the meaning of each word and how to spell it.

brochure	extinction
disruptive	squander
analyse	impersonation
eliminate	hyperventilate
bungalow	precarious
receptionist	traitor
instinct	gadget
supersonic	refugee
charade	apologise
phantom	optimistic
squeamish	mortgage
survivor	campaign
suspicious	toxic
lucrative	allergic
ecological	incoherent

## PERSONALITY PROFILES

List all the Kennedy family plus Mr Read and Paddy along the top of a sheet of paper:

MUM      DAD      COLIN      ALLIE      Mr READ      PADDY

In columns beneath the names, list the adjective numbers which best describe each character's personality. (You may find some words which suit more than one person, or don't suit anybody.)

1. stressed	13. critical	25. busy	37. hard working
2. friendly	14. forgetful	26. lucky	38. assertive
3. clever	15. hungry	27. grumpy	39. laid back
4. unhappy	16. energetic	28. kind	40. dedicated
5. enthusiastic	17. self reliant	29. shy	41. relaxed
6. responsible	18. fun loving	30. brave	42. imaginative
7. helpful	19. obsessed	31. serious	43. cheerful
8. pretty	20. reasonable	32. sporty	44. stupid
9. practical	21. organised	33. selfish	45. determined
10. scruffy	22. depressed	34. vain	46. successful
11. worried	23. sensitive	35. artistic	47. humble
12. generous	24. calm	36. lazy	48. flamboyant

## SPEAKING AND ACTING

- TV newsreader / newsflash. Write out a report or newsworthy story about something from the book – it could be announcing the demonstration, about the hang-gliding accident, or invent your own news with an environmental theme. Take turns to read out each other's stories as a TV newsreader. You could make a TV screen to talk from by cutting a shaped opening in a large cardboard box.
- Without speaking, act out a character doing something from the book. See how quickly the class can guess who you are.
- Read pages 85–88 about the Family Conference. Then four students act as members of the Kennedy family, either following what happens in the book or writing a play script for their own dialogue.
- Radio talkback or roving TV interview. In pairs, do the talking in an interview situation: one to be the reporter and one to be a character from the book. For instance, what might Diana Vial say if she phoned in to radio talkback to complain about having to live next door to the Rubbish Rescue Centre? What might Paddy say if he is showing a reporter around his new job at Grabmore Landfill? What questions might the interviewers want to ask?
- Have a panel of 'character experts' – say, four students at a time. The rest of the class asks each panel member questions to see how well they know their character from the book. This could be done by way of 'True or False' questioning. A Yum Yum Chocolate Bar to the most knowledgeable 'expert'!

## EXTENSION AND RESEARCH TOPICS

- Extinct and endangered species. Find out what creatures have become extinct in the world, and why they died out. What about here in NZ? Were humans to blame? What is being done to help protect endangered species? Find out about bird sanctuaries, forest parks and marine reserves in NZ. As examples: research the moa, the takahe, Hector's dolphins, Kapiti Island, Waipoua Kauri Forest, Greenpeace, the Forest and Bird Society, Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust etc.
- Read the quotations at the beginning of each chapter as a starting point for ideas:
  - (1) – Then either write an essay or do a drawing to describe what you think the world will be like in 50 years time if everybody leaves it up to someone else to help save Planet Earth.
  - (2) – As a class, put together a giant wall poster using all the ideas from the individual essays and drawings.

## MAKING THINGS

- Make a hanging wind chime out of lengths of metal pipe offcuts, or any other bits and pieces of waste scrap. Have you seen the ones made out of old forks and spoons?
- If you've got plenty of time and a garden to use the compost in, set up a Worm Farm, following the instructions on pages 127–29.
- Read the instructions on pages 130–31 for making recycled paper. Design your own notepaper or greeting cards. (Use different sorts of paper and fibres to experiment with textures and colours.)
- Making music – create some instruments from scraps and junk then accompany the class chant or a protest song. Suggestions: blow across the top of a bottle, clack spoons together, shake a stick with lots of bottle tops nailed to it, make bongo drums from cans and stretched rubber, make a pair of maracas (Latin American percussion instruments) from the *papier mâché* suggestions below. Get creative and invent something! Think up a name for your band.

### *Papier mâché*

The term *papier mâché* (pronounced pop-ee-ay mash-ay) comes from the French phrase meaning 'chewed paper' – but relax, you don't need to chew the paper yourself! *Papier mâché* is made from newspaper and paste.

Projects are easy to make, but messy. They can take several days to complete, so allow enough time.

**Paste recipe:** Mix 1 cup of flour into 1 cup of water until the mixture is thin and runny. Stir into 4 cups of boiling water (boiling gives it a nice consistency). Simmer for about 3 minutes, then cool.

(A paste of 2 parts liquid school glue or white household glue mixed with 1 part water will work also.)

Put the paste in a bucket or use plastic ice cream containers.

**Layering method:** Tear up strips of newspaper. Dip each strip in paste and overlap them on your mould. Do three layers. Using a big paint brush, smooth each layer and spread the paste.

**Paper pulp method:** Tear up newspaper into small pieces and put to soak in the paste. Mash the mixture or squeeze by hand until it feels like clay. The *papier mâché* can be smoothed over moulds or simply sculpted into smaller shapes. Allow to dry completely.

#### **Important notes:**

- **Mess alert!** Wear old clothes or a smock. Always cover your work area, including the floor, with newspapers before beginning. Clean the paste off anything it is not supposed to be on as it dries like cement.
- **Removal hint.** When using a shaped plastic mould (e.g. a bowl) for *papier mâché*, cover it with petroleum jelly first. This will make removal easier. (This is not necessary if using a balloon as the mould.)
- **Drying time.** You can let each layer dry before adding another, or do all the layers at once. Depending on the thickness, it can take a few days for complete drying. To speed up the process for objects made of pulp, place them on baking paper and dry in an oven at 70°C for 2–3 hours.

#### **SUGGESTIONS FOR PROJECTS**

1. **World Globe:** Great to teach more about the geography of Planet Earth. *Instructions:* Blow up and tie a balloon. Paste three layers of overlapping paper strips all around it and let dry for a couple of days. Using maps, an atlas, or a commercial globe for reference, get students to paint in the seven continents and the oceans; mark in the Equator, North & South Poles; label the countries and oceans; explain longitude & latitude. Varnish to complete.
2. **Character or Animal Masks:** Use a balloon for the basic shape – the 'mould'. Also, such things as toilet-paper tubes, egg carton sections, shoe boxes and plastic cups could be taped together. Layer strips of pasted paper or pulp over half the balloon to build up the features. Pop the balloon and remove the mould when the *papier mâché* is dry. Trim the mask with scissors. If you haven't already sculpted the features, add them now – ears, noses, teeth, horns, beaks, frills, crests etc. made from cardboard or styrofoam. Poke holes for the eyes, and in the sides for string or elastic. Paint your mask, adding such things as glitter, feathers, and wool 'hair' for more impact.
3. **Maracas:** Make a pair of colourful rattles and join the band! *Instructions:* Cover a used light bulb with three layers of *papier mâché*. When completely dry, knock the bulb hard enough for the glass to shatter within – these pieces will make the rattle sound. Paint in bright colours, then varnish.
4. **Jewellery** (bracelet / pendant / necklace): make lots of beads squeezed into shape from paper pulp then poke a hole in each bead with a toothpick. Do the drying, painting, and varnishing stages before you string them onto elastic or sturdy thread.