

# A Palette of Fun with Arts and Crafts

## Supporting School-Age Accreditation and Quality Programming

Arts and crafts can be woven into many parts of the School-Age program as either short or long term projects. Conduct the project at an age-appropriate level for each participant so that everyone has fun and improves their skill levels. Art projects should always be available to children as a choice activity. Provide direction as needed – but encourage children to express their own ideas.

## Opportunities for Youth Leadership and Development and Cross-age Teaching

As already suggested, grades 4-6 children can help K-3 children with many of the projects. They will do best with a little adult direction and training. Before they work with younger children, help them learn how to organize their time, work as a team, and give and take directions. These experiences will help them enhance life skills and develop critical thinking skills.

## Ideas! Ideas! Ideas!

Brainstorming with children, youth and parents is a great way to generate a list of ideas for field trips, speakers, and websites. Here are some examples: Visit local art galleries and museums. Invite artists, art teachers, decorators, folk artists, or animators to talk about their careers and how a person can become an artist.



See the **Resource Guide, pages 132-133**, for suggestions of additional materials. Watch an animated movie, a puppet show, or a play; then talk about how art is important to the production.

## Essential Elements of 4-H Youth Development

Through 4-H, youth know they are cared about and feel a sense of BELONGING; they exercise INDEPENDENCE by using decision-making and action to influence people and events; they develop a sense of MASTERY by learning skills needed in making positive career and life choices; and they experience GENEROSITY by helping others through community service. These elements support the Army Youth Development Components of Belonging, Success, Service and Independence.

## Providing Quality Middle School and Teen Programming

Although this was not created to be an MST curriculum, many of the projects would be interesting and challenging for youth beyond the 6th grade. Let the youth experiment and see how they can expand the activities.



## Summary

There are lots of projects in this guide to make the arts and crafts program interesting and educational. Each project includes suggestions for expanding the activity, as well as for connecting with other activities and bringing in community resources. Most materials are easy to find and inexpensive. Enter some contests or the county fair or hold an art exhibit. Let everyone be proud of the children and all their great work as they learn about art and develop life skills.

# THE Army 4-H EXPRESS GUIDE TO

## A Palette of Fun with Arts and Crafts



A great way to engage children in creative activities is to put out a variety of materials and let them make something original. Get children excited about arts and crafts and watch them learn while having fun.



## Project Goals

The goal of *A Palette of Fun with Arts and Crafts* is to discover ways to introduce children to a variety of art activities, teaching the principles of design and how to develop skills for a lifetime. The skills include thinking, learning to learn, relating and communicating, giving to the group effort and being a member of the group. The Guide gives all the needed information; it's not necessary to have any art education (or talent!) to be a project leader.

## Four Fun Activities

**1 Musical Fingers, Unit 3, Painting, page 43** combines painting and music to make paint. Have three to six selections of recorded music and a playback system – or a live musician – in a room large enough to dry paintings. Give each child a piece of paper to go with each piece of music. Kids listen with their eyes closed, and then paint whatever goes with the rhythm. Conduct a reflection discussion and have children help with clean-up.

**2** See how creative children can be as they modify each other's work in **Pass the Sculpture, Please, Unit 4, Sculpting, page 60**. Of course everyone should understand they're going to make changes to each other's sculptures, and that changes should enhance while keeping the original intent. Talk about using texture, balance, and proportion. Ask reflection questions in the guide followed by application questions that help children learn life skills.

**3** Children love to watch and hear trains go by. **Balloon Train, Unit 7, 3-D Construction, page 116** encourages children and adults to become a train. Each child and adult creates two sides of a circus train car and tapes them to a balloon. Then everyone lines up and makes a train, with each person's balloon held against his or her stomach, and against the back of the person in front. See how far the "train" can walk without touching balloons. Add train sounds to make it more creative. Ask the reflect and apply questions.

**4** This activity starts at the program but may continue at home as children and their family members make other sculptures. Use the "art you can eat" bread, pretzel, and glass cookie recipes, from **Delicious and Edible Art, Unit 4, Sculpting, A Family Adventure, page 74**. Have children choose one recipe to make. All the dough recipes are good for sculpting and must be baked, so at least a toaster oven is needed.

## Experiential Learning



Experiential Learning engages children and youth while they learn, share, and grow through their 4-H experiences. With an adult as the coach, the first step is "doing" or exploring. Next, youth share what they did and discuss the experience with their peers. After they've identified the skills and knowledge gained, help them determine how to apply these to other situations in their lives.

## Project Activity Guides and Target Age Groups

There's only one guide for this project. It's a helper's guide for children's art activities, grades K-6, with 45 separate projects. These are divided into seven units: **Cutting and Pasting; Drawing; Painting; Sculpting; Printing; Fiber; and 3-D Construction**. Each unit also contains a family activity which can be used at a family night or can be done at home.



## Integrating Technology

As technology possibilities continue to grow there are many ways to combine technology with arts and crafts. Some suggestions include: exploring paint or drawing programs in the technology lab; taking digital pictures of art projects; and creating a collection for each child. On the first page of each unit in the guide, a Technology reference suggests websites and software related to the unit.

## Related 4-H Projects

Youth and adults who enjoy arts and crafts may consider related projects such as Sewing, Visual Arts, Public Speaking, and Woodworking.

## Life Skills

"Skills that help an individual to be successful in living a productive and satisfying life" are identified as Life Skills (Hendricks, 1996). Life Skills in this project include decision-making, communicating, leading self and others, planning, and organizing. Although each activity specifically targets only one life skill, youth have the opportunity to practice several.

## Community Service Service Learning Opportunities

Creating and sharing arts and crafts relates to many community service and service-learning projects. Service should be a part of all 4-H projects as well as all Army activities. Find a project that is interesting to the children and youth and has value for the community. Here's a starting point:

- Display children's work, and change it regularly so they can take some of it home.
- If possible, send items to parents who are deployed.
- Encourage children to use projects as gifts for family and friends.
- Enter projects in the county fair or other art contests.
- Have some children teach others how to do an art project.

## Linking to the Army's Four Service Areas and Baseline Programming



### Sports, Fitness and Health Options

Two of the four service areas naturally fit together here. By first doing sports or fitness activities that are fun and burn energy, more children will be able to concentrate on an art activity that requires sitting quietly. Healthy nutrition habits also contribute to better focus and clearer thinking. **Go Drawing Go, Unit 2, pages 35-39**, gives children a chance to be models for each other. The models need to be active and then freeze in a position so that others can do a gesture drawing of the action. See Artistic Stages in Children page 128 to understand how levels of skill and interest develop in the arts just as they do in sports.

### Arts, Recreation and Leisure Activities

Makeup, mask-making, costuming, set design and building, and puppetry are essential *Arts and Crafts* activities supported by the curriculum. The curriculum supports a wide variety of arts, recreation and leisure activities that allow children to explore new ways of expressing themselves.

### Life Skills, Citizenship, and Leadership Opportunities

The elements and principles of design introduced in this project will be useful throughout life and may be the foundation for more advanced art education. Most of the projects have a group work element that helps children learn to share materials and ideas as well as to work as a team. The children should also help with preparation and clean-up for each activity. Encourage the group to make a collage that represents CYS Services using the **Make a Collage activity, Unit 6, pages 112-113**.

### Academic Support, Mentoring, and Intervention Services

The guide presents many educational aspects of each project including culture, history, science, and geography. These ideas reinforce what's taught in school. If K-6 graders are doing the projects together there's a good opportunity for older children to mentor younger ones. Following the suggestion in **Unit 3, Art on the Go: Visiting a Museum, pages 52-53**, visit the garrison museum or local community museum and talk with the curator about the skills they need to do their job.

## Character Connection

Encourage youth to model the Pillars of Character by:

- Being persistence in learning all of the required skills.
- Sharing a well made craft with someone.
- Donating craft items to local organizations.

Additional character resources can be found at [www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org](http://www.4-hmilitarypartnerships.org)