

Paper Mosaics

(Art Activity)

Audience:

Activity can be adapted for all levels K-12, but is particularly useful with elementary and middle school students.

Purpose:

Students learn to make paper mosaics as a creative stress reduction activity.

Glossary:

Mosaics – an ancient art form usually made by arranging small pieces of stone or glass to create a beautiful picture or pattern.

Materials:

- One 8.5"x11" or 9"x12" piece of colored construction paper
- Colored construction paper scraps or discarded magazines
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Glue
- Pictures of mosaics from books, internet and/or teacher's samples (see *attached samples*)
- Modification: for K-1 prepare mosaic patterns and pre-cut paper tiles

Content:

Teacher introduces the concept of mosaics as a creative, calming and fun stress reduction strategy. Show students pictures of mosaics from books or from the internet. Ask students about their own experiences in making mosaics or seeing mosaics in their community/city. Point out very simple "mosaics" students can easily relate to, for example, bathroom ceramic tiles (this gives a clear picture of how "paper tiles" will be arranged on their drawings). Teacher reviews materials to be used and general rules applied to this type of activity in the classroom.

Instructions:

1. Students clear their desks of books, folders, etc.
2. Using a pencil, students draw the outline of an object, shape or scene on a 8.5"x11" or 9"x12" piece of paper (see examples attached of Butterfly, Elephant, Flowers, Cat's Face).
3. Students then cut small colored square paper "tiles" from the scrap construction paper or the magazines (tear out pages you would like to use and then cut the pictures up into little square "tiles"). Modification: for K-1 prepare mosaic patterns and pre-cut paper tiles.
4. Explain to students that each outline should be filled with tiles of the same color.

5. Working with one shape/area/figure at a time, students apply glue to the inside of their outlined shapes, and then place the paper “tiles” in the shape/outline, leaving a small space between each paper “tile” (for some shapes, students may have to cut “customized tiles” to effectively fill in the shape).
6. Students repeat the glue and placement of “tiles” in each shape/outline of their drawings until the mosaic is complete.

Extension:

Follow-up by having students share their mosaics with the class and facilitating a discussion about what students liked and found challenging about the activity. Make connection between the activity and stress reduction and discuss the impact of the activity with students. If students enjoyed the activity, plan a follow-up lesson to give students a chance to improve their mosaic making skills.