

Mosaic Bin

**After returning from the DIA field trip focused on mosaic art pieces, create a space/bin that your child can place scrap materials in. Encourage your child to put scraps into the space/bin anytime he or she is cleaning up.*

Summary Description: Make mosaics from scrap materials collected and saved in a "mosaic bin."

Level: Preschool

Cost: Under \$5

Mess factor: None

Suggested location: Kitchen table or table outside

Children will experience:

- Art creativity
- New vocabulary words

Materials:

- Leftover and scrap materials your child collects in a "mosaic bin" (such as paper and fabric scraps, crayons stubs, bits of dried play dough, pieces of string)
- Supplementary scrap materials, as needed (e.g., wood scraps, yarn, netting)
- Sheets of construction paper, cardboard, or other sturdy paper on which to make the mosaics
- Fasteners such as tape, glue sticks, and/or glue
- Damp sponges and paper towels for wiping up drips and spills
- Examples of mosaic art reproductions from the DIA (For links to mosaics from the DIA, please see page 3)

Definition: A MOSAIC is a picture made from many small pieces of various materials.

Vocabulary words/topics to focus on while conversing with your child:

mosaic, assemble, color, size, shape, and texture.

Beginning: Talk with your child about the DIA field trip and show your child pictures of mosaic art reproductions. Tell your child that today we are making mosaics using the materials collected in the “mosaic bin.” Give your child a piece of paper and a small basket of scrap materials. Encourage your child to assemble the pieces together to design the mosaic. Your child may choose to look at the mosaic art reproductions for ideas.

Middle: After a few minutes of your child arranging scrap pieces for the mosaic, bring out the tape and/or glue. Talk with your child about the materials used and how he or she has arranged and attached them to the paper. Describe and encourage your child to describe the materials’ attributes such as color, shape, size, and texture. Put additional scrap materials, along with the fasteners, in the middle of the table for you and your child to add to your mosaics.

Describe your child’s work and encourage them to look at and comment on one another’s work; for example, you might say, “I see you made a shiny collage by gluing foil onto your paper.” Help your child solve problems as they arise: for example, difficulties getting certain materials to stick to the page.

End: Let your child know when there are about five minutes left in the activity. Together with your child, put any scrap materials that are still usable in the “mosaic bin” and put the rest in the trash or recycling bin, as appropriate.

Younger children:

- Young toddlers probably will not talk as much about what they are doing. They are more interested in just making things and exploring the materials.

- Young children enjoy it when others copy what they are doing. Imitate young children's actions as they create!
- Describe what you see children doing — for example, "Oh you are putting the broken crayon pieces on your paper."

Older children:

- School-age children love this activity because making mosaics is a new way for them to express themselves. Their mosaics will have many details.
- Challenge children to create a mosaic of themselves.
- Children might like to do this project over several days, so help them find a place to keep the work-in-progress.

More!

- Ask children what other materials they could add to the "mosaic bin". When cleaning up each day, remind your children to make use of the "mosaic bin" before they discard or recycle things, so they can make another mosaic on another day. Children may also want to collect items found outside to add to the "mosaic bin".

Links to mosaics from the Detroit Institute of Arts:

Viewing this as a printed resource? You can find the art pieces listed below by visiting <https://dia.org/collection> and searching for each art piece by name.

- [Quilting Time, 1986](#)
- [Mushhushshu-dragon, Symbol of the God Marduk, 604 - 562 BCE](#)
- [Roundel of Mosaic Tile, 15th - 16th century](#)
- [Mosaic Tile Wall Revetment, 15th century](#)
- [Fish, 4th century](#)