

## Looking at Art Reproductions: Mosaics

**Summary Description:** Children observe reproductions of mosaic artwork from the DIA based on their artistic (aesthetic) characteristics.

**Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality:** Creative Arts – 5. Early Learning Expectation: Aesthetic Appreciation. Children develop rich and rewarding aesthetic lives.

**HighScope Curriculum content:** KDI 40. Art and KDI 44. Appreciating the Arts. Also: KDI 45. Observing

**HighScope COR Advantage items:** X. Art.  
Also: BB. Observing and classifying

**Time of day:** Small-group time

### Materials:

- Examples of mosaic art reproductions from the DIA (enough for each child to have three to five pictures) (for links to mosaics from the DIA, please see page 4)

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

**Vocabulary words/topics to focus on while conversing with children:**  
mosaic, assemble, color, size, shape, and texture.

**Beginning:** Talk with the children about the DIA field trip and show them the pictures of mosaic art reproductions. Discuss one of the mosaic artwork pieces with the children, pointing out such things as subject matter, medium, and the use of color, line, and so on. Give each child two to three pictures and

say something like “I wonder what you will see in these mosaic art pieces and what similarities and differences you notice.”

**Middle:** Converse with children about the properties of the artwork on their pictures of the mosaic artwork. Describe and encourage them to describe features of interest to them, and how they include those features in their own artwork. For example, you might say, “You noticed this one used shades of blue. What colors do you like to use when you create art? or “This artist took lots of small pieces to make a picture of an animal. You often draw pictures of your family and your dog, Cocoa.” Midway through the activity, give children one or two additional pictures to share and compare.

The chart below offers an example, at each developmental level, of what children may say and do along with ideas for scaffolding (supporting and gently extending) their learning.

| Scaffolding Learning at Each Developmental Level  |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Earlier   | Middle   | Later  |
| <p><b>Children may:</b></p> <p>Focus primarily on non-artistic features: for example, comment that “it’s a picture of a dog,” and then look for other pictures with dogs.</p> | <p><b>Children may:</b></p> <p>Notice one or two artistic features: for example, the medium or a dominant color.</p> | <p><b>Children may:</b></p> <p>Comment on several artistic qualities: for example, whether the picture shows something real (figurative art) or is just “lines, shapes, and colors” (abstract art); whether something is made of metal or wood; or whether there are lots of lines or broad swaths of color.</p> |

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p><b>Adults can:</b></p> <p>Repeat children's observations and help them look for related images.</p>   | <p><b>Adults can:</b></p> <p>Ask children what other artistic reproductions feature that medium or have similar (or contrasting) colors.</p>   | <p><b>Adults can:</b></p> <p>Encourage children to share their pictures with others, looking for similarities and differences in the qualities they've mentioned, and talk about variations within a medium. For example, discuss how mosaics can be made of glass, metal, stone, or cloth (fiber).</p> |
| <p><b>Gentle extension:</b></p> <p>Ask children what else they notice about the picture: for example, the materials used to make it, or types of lines, shapes or colors they see.</p> | <p><b>Gentle extension:</b></p> <p>Encourage children to notice additional artistic features; for example, by commenting on how smaller pieces were arranged together to make the mosaic, and encouraging children to find other reproductions that use the same techniques.</p> | <p><b>Gentle extension:</b></p> <p>Ask children about the artists' intentions and choice of technique. For example, you might say, "Why do you think the artist chose these colors?"</p>  |

**End:** Let children know when there are about five minutes left in the activity. Tell children that the pictures will be in the art area if they want to continue working with them. Invite children to pretend to pick up small pieces from the ground and in the air for a mosaic as they move to the next activity in the daily routine.



**Follow up:** Post reproductions of mosaic artwork at children's eye level throughout the room, choosing pieces that reflect the interest area in which they are posted.

**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](#)