

Mosaic Bin

**After returning from the DIA field trip focused on mosaic art pieces, create a space/bin that children can place scrap materials in. Encourage children to put scraps into the space/bin during cleanup time. You can also encourage children to bring scrap materials from home.*

Summary Description: Children make mosaics from scrap materials they have collected and saved in a classroom “mosaic bin.”

Michigan Early Childhood Standards of Quality: Creative Arts – 1. Early Learning Expectation: Visual Arts. Children show how they feel, what they think, and what they are learning through experiences in the visual arts.

HighScope Curriculum content: KDI 40. Art.

Also: KDI 17. Fine-motor skills

HighScope COR Advantage items: X. Art.

Also: J. Fine-motor skills

Time of day: Small-group time

Materials:

- Leftover and scrap materials children have deposited in a “mosaic bin” at cleanup time (things they find or bring from home, 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 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 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. Tell the children that today they are going to make mosaics using the materials the class has been collecting in the “mosaic bin.” Give each child a piece of paper and a small basket of scrap materials. Encourage children to assemble the pieces together to design their mosaic. Children may choose to look at the mosaic art reproductions for ideas.

Middle: After a few minutes of children arranging their scrap pieces for their mosaics, pass out the tape and/or glue. Circulate among the children, talking about the materials they are using and how they are arranging and fastening (sticking) them to their paper. Describe and encourage children to describe the materials’ attributes, such as color, shape, size, and texture. Put the remaining scrap materials, along with the fasteners, in the middle of the table for the group to share as back up materials.

Describe children’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 the children solve problems as they arise: for example, difficulties getting certain materials to stick to the page.

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

Scaffolding Learning at Each Developmental Level		
Earlier	Middle	Later
Children may: Explore the sensory properties of the materials: for example, children may crumple the paper, roll dried play dough bits between fingers, or squeeze glue over their paper.	Children may: Say something about the materials they are using, such as "This material is shiny."	Children may: Use the mosaic materials to make something representational, such as a human figure or an animal.
Adults can: Copy children's actions and describe what adults are doing: "I like to squeeze the glue and watch it spread out over the paper."	Adults can: Acknowledge children's observations with a comment: for example, "Yes, this fabric is shiny."	Adults can: Talk about the details children have included in their work.
Gentle extension: Ask children to describe the materials they are using and what they are doing so adults can imitate them.	Gentle extension: Encourage children to find other materials that are the same or different: "I wonder	Gentle extension: Wonder what other details children might include: for example, point at a child's picture and say, "I see you used

	what else you can find that looks shiny.”	buttons to make the eyes – I wonder what materials you could use to make other parts of the face.”
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End: Let children know when there are about five minutes left in the activity. Together with the children, put any scrap materials that are still usable in the “mosaic bin” and put the rest in the trash or recycling bin, as appropriate. Pick one of the materials and tell children to move to the next activity like that material, for example, say, “Let’s move to the snack tables like we’re pieces of slippery satin fabric.”

Follow up: Ask children what other materials the class could add to the “mosaic bin”. At cleanup time each day, remind children to make use of the “mosaic bin” before they discard or recycle things.

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](#)