

## Mosaics With Fabric Pieces

**Summary Description:** Children will explore the aesthetic properties of different types of fabric as they create their own fabric mosaic quilts.

**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 and KDI 44. Appreciating the Arts. Also: KDI 17. Fine-motor skills and KDI 38. Patterns

**HighScope COR Advantage items:** X. Art.  
Also: J. Fine-motor skills and V. Patterns

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

### Materials:

- Examples of mosaic art reproductions from the DIA and/or pictures of quilts
- Fabric pieces of different textures, colors, designs, and shapes (ask families to bring in fabric scraps, particularly those that reflect materials and designs from their cultures)
- Colored masking tape
- Scissors (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, quilt, 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 and/or pictures of quilts. Ask if they have quilts at home (e.g., bedspreads, pillows, potholders, wall hangings). Talk about how quilts are made like mosaics “by stitching together different pieces of fabric to make a pattern or design.” Pass around several samples of fabric for children to feel and look at. Give each child a basket with fabric scraps, tape, and scissors. Say something like “I wonder what the quilts you make will look like.”

**Middle:** Talk with children about the colors, textures, and designs of the fabrics in their baskets. Comment on the fabrics they choose and how they arrange them: for example, you might say, “You’re using lots of red and blue pieces in your quilt,” or “The materials you chose feel soft.” Encourage children to share and exchange samples and bring out additional fabric scraps as a backup material. Help them with the tape or scissors as needed and refer children to one another for assistance.

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
<b>Children may:</b> Choose single pieces of fabric and place tape all over them.	<b>Children may:</b> Choose fabric pieces at random but place them in a square or rectangle and may tape some or all the pieces together,	<b>Children may:</b> Choose specific pieces of fabric or cut them to size to make a design they have in mind; they may express a

	using one or more colors of tape.	preference for certain colors or patterns.
<b>Adults can:</b> Describe and encourage children to describe the characteristics of the material they are using, such as its color, width, or texture.	<b>Adults can:</b> Comment on children's choices and how they arrange them: "You put all the light-colored pieces on the top and a row of dark fabric on the bottom; you attached them with red tape."	<b>Adults can:</b> Encourage children to describe the materials and colored tape they are using and how they are piecing their quilts together.
<b>Gentle extension:</b> Compare different pieces of cloth in children's baskets: "This piece is all one solid color; that one has lots of colors."	<b>Gentle extension:</b> Look at photos of quilts together and discuss how they are similar to and/ or different from the arrangements the children are creating.	<b>Gentle extension:</b> Ask children why they chose a particular piece of fabric and/or color of tape, why they particularly like something, and about the feelings evoked by the quilt's design: "You chose all bright colors. How do those colors make you feel?"

**End:** Let children know when there are about five minutes left in the activity. Together with the children, put all materials away. Suggest to children that they move their arms and legs like scissors as they go to the next activity in the daily routine.

**Follow up:** Incorporate a variety of fabrics into different areas of the room and outdoor play space (e.g., blankets in the house area; a patterned tarp over the sandbox). Ask families to bring in quilts for children to look at and observe both the variety of materials as well as the types of stitching the quilters use.

**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](#)