

REUSE ART PROJECTS

With a little creativity, many items that we commonly consider waste can be reused. By using commonly trashed or recycled items in art projects, you can help raise awareness about waste reduction, save money on buying art supplies and create unique masterpieces!

Outcomes

Participants will rethink items that are typically considered waste by creating art projects from trash or other reusable materials.

Audience

Youth (ages 3+), parents and children

Time

30 - 60 minutes , varies by type of art project

Concepts

- Old “trash” materials can be used to create art projects.
- You can save money while reducing waste by reusing products.
- Art can be used to spread awareness about waste reduction.

Supplies

- Recyclable art materials (old newspapers, magazines, plastic bottles, empty toilet paper or paper towel rolls, etc.)
- Trash art materials (old chip bags, pizza boxes, aluminum foil, etc.)
- Old, broken crayons
- Glue
- Scissors
- Paint (*optional*)
- Art materials such as yarn, ribbon, thread and buttons (*optional*)
- Sewing needles or sewing machine (*optional*)
- Fabric (*optional*)



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Preparation

Collect materials and consider asking participants to help you collect reusable art supplies.

Procedure

- Discuss issues related to waste reduction (refer to the background information). Have participants decide on a message you want the art to express that will encourage people to take action.
 - Allow participants to use their creativity or create a sample model of what they could create. Some ideas include:
 - Decorate an old picture frame
 - Sew old clothes into new clothes
 - Create a mural from items that can't be recycled
 - Make a snow globe using a small glass jar from jam, baby food, olives, etc. and an old small toy that can fit inside the jar. Decorate the inside of the jar with paint or glitter to look like snow.
 - Use an oatmeal container to create a holder for pencils and pens. Decorate the oatmeal container with colored paper, crayons and markers.
- Remember to not glue or tape items in ways that make them impossible to recycle later.**
- Have participants display their creations for their families and friends. Consider creating invitations to view their art with the reuse art materials.

Discussion questions

- How can art be used to spread awareness about environmental issues like waste reduction? How did people respond to the reuse art projects?
- How did the reuse art projects compare to non-reuse art projects?
- Will you continue to create reuse art projects with trash materials? Why or why not?

Additional activity ideas

Create new crayons from old, broken ones

- Peel all paper off of broken crayons
- Preheat oven to 275 degrees Fahrenheit
- Spray large or small muffin tin with cooking spray
- Fill tins with broken crayons (solid or mixed colors)
- Bake in oven for 7 to 14 minutes
- While still warm, use a toothpick to swirl colors if desired
- Cool completely, then pop out of tins