

# Creative Marbles

## Project 1

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### Supplies and Tools

brushes  
decoupage medium  
hot glue and hot-glue gun (optional) *or*  
beading/jewelry glue  
pencils or pens  
small scissors (1 for each participant)  
Styrofoam trays

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### Materials

cork (optional)  
craft marbles (these come in  
various sizes)  
felt (optional)  
magnets (optional)  
paint (optional)  
paper scrap  
pin backs (optional)

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### Step 1: Cutting Your Pictures

Looking through the paper scrap, find words or pictures that will fit the flat side of the marbles. If you're having trouble, leaf through the scrap until you find a page that jumps out at you. Then just pass a blank marble over the page until you find something that works.

Once you've chosen a word or picture, place a marble over the item and trace around it with your pencil. Then lift the marble and use the scissors to cut around the pencil line. If your cutout doesn't match perfectly, don't worry. You can trim it later.

Put your picture under your marble, move it to your tray, and continue looking for more pictures until you have something for each of your marbles.

Here are some design tips:

When using comic books, remember that word balloons can make excellent marbles.

The finished marbles look better when the entire flat surface on the bottom of the marble is taken up by an image.

If you have a cool picture that's too big for your marble, use just a piece of that image.

Sometimes just a pattern or texture will make a great image.

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### Step 2: Decoupageing

This step can get kind of messy, so be prepared to get glue on your hands.

Once you have all your pictures or words cut out, you'll want to have your decoupage medium and brush handy. Brush a light coat of decoupage medium onto the flat surface of the marble. Place the picture *with the side you want showing facing into the decoupage medium*. (It will dry clear, so don't worry.) Press your picture firmly into place, and then brush another light coat of decoupage medium onto the back of the picture. If paper is hanging slightly over the edge of the marble, run your finger around it and press it up around the marble. If you have a lot of overhang, you may want to leave it and trim later.

As you decoupage each marble, place it onto your tray *upside down* to dry. When all your marbles are decoupageed, leave them to dry for at least twenty minutes.

## Creative Marbles

### ***Step 3: Finishing***

If you plan to use your marbles as tokens and don't want to add felt to the back, then you are done as soon as your marbles dry. However, even if you just want the marbles to be set out for your teens to play with, they'll last a lot longer and have a more finished appearance if you felt or paint the back.

Before adding whatever backing you've chosen, check each marble and clean up any stray glue spots on the faces or use your scissors to trim away any overhanging edges.

Painting the back of the marbles is the easiest and most straightforward finish. You may want to do this even if you plan to add a pin back or magnet. Color doesn't necessarily matter, but remember that the paint will show through any uncovered places on the back of your marble.

If you're planning to use your marbles as tokens, it's a good idea to felt the back of the marbles so they're less likely to damage tables or other library furniture. Measure the felt the same way you measured the pictures, tracing around the marble with a pencil or pen and cutting on the line. Use hot glue to glue the felt to the back of the marble. This may require more supervision of the group as they use the hot-glue gun. White glue will also work, but because the felt is quite porous, it will take some time to dry completely.

Adding a magnet or pin back is as easy as dabbing a drop of hot glue onto the back of the marble and placing the magnet or pin back in place. Again, using the hot-glue gun may require more direct supervision of your group. Other glues, such as jewelry glue, will work as well. If you prefer not to use a hot-glue gun, check your local craft shop or art supply store for other options.

# Melted Crayon Bookmarks

## Project 2

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### Supplies and Tools

glue stick (1 for each participant)	paper plates
hole punch	parchment or waxed paper
iron	pencil (1 for each participant)
ironing board (optional)	ruler (1 for each participant)
masking tape	scissors (1 pair for each participant)
Styrofoam trays (large size; 1 for each participant)	vegetable peelers (1 for each participant)
towels (2 old ones to use as pressing cloths)	white glue

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### Materials

colored card stock or premade blank bookmarks	embellishments (beads, sequins, etc.; optional)
crayons (the children's librarian may have some leftover stubs that you can scavenge)	markers (optional)
	tassel materials (cord, embroidery floss, twine, etc.)
	vellum quotes (optional)

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### Step 1: Preparing the Crayons

Using the vegetable peeler, grate crayons onto paper plates. Changing the pressure on the peeler or the length of the stroke will change the consistency of your shavings. Remember to use a different paper plate for each color.

Many varieties of crayons are available now, and different types will yield different results. Try glitter crayons for a subtle sparkle. Artist pastels will melt a bit thicker for a more textured look.

### Step 2: Applying the Colors

Place a strip of masking tape along the left side of the fold on the bookmark blank. This will be the back of your bookmark, and you'll want to keep the crayon from getting on this side.

Next, sprinkle crayon shavings onto the front of the bookmark blank. It's better to use less of the crayon shavings than you think you need. You can always add more in a second layer, but if you have too much, you'll just end up with a messy, waxy blob.

The way in which you lay down your colors will give you different results. Sprinkling a lot of different colors on at once will blend the colors when they are ironed, whereas putting down one color, ironing, then putting a different color over that and ironing again will give a more layered effect. Single colors can also give a nice effect, especially on colored card stock.

You can also arrange the pattern of the shavings, but very minimally. It's best not to try for specific shapes when putting down your shavings, but you can create stripes of color or more abstract representations.

### Step 3: Ironing

Once you have a layer of shavings ready to iron, *carefully* carry your tray over to the ironing station. Place the unfolded bookmark on the ironing board or towel, being careful not to shake off the shavings. Cover the bookmark with a piece of parchment paper or waxed paper, and then cover that with a thin towel or pressing cloth. Set the iron's temperature on high and firmly run the iron over the pressing cloth. *Do not use steam.* Press for about thirty seconds. Lift the pressing cloth to see if the crayon is melted. If not, press again.

## Melted Crayon Bookmarks

If the crayon shavings aren't melting the way you'd like, try running the iron directly over the parchment paper. Be careful, though, of any wax running out from under the paper.

Repeat steps 2 and 3 as needed until you get the desired effect.

### ***Step 4: Gluing***

After letting your bookmark cool briefly, remove the masking tape and fold along the crease. Apply glue with the glue stick to the inside of the bookmark. Fold over and glue together. This should give you a cleaner back and a stronger bookmark.

### ***Step 5: Embellishing***

Add character to your bookmark with embellishments. Use the markers to draw or write your own quotes, or use white glue to attach vellum quotes and other decora-

tions (e.g., sequins, small beads, etc.). Keep any three-dimensional embellishment small and lightweight so as not to damage the book or make the bookmark too heavy to use.

### ***Step 6: Tasseling***

To make a tassel, wrap twine or embroidery floss around a ruler or a square of cardboard (1 inch wide at least), leaving a 4½-inch-long tail at the lead-in. Wrap ten to fifteen times, leaving another 4½-inch-long tail on the end. Clip off the excess. Loop the tails under the wrapped strands and bring them back around to tie a knot, gathering the wrapped strands together. Knot the tails at their loose ends and clip short. Turn over the ruler or cardboard and clip the wrapped strands in the middle.

Punch a hole at the top center of your bookmark. Thread the tassel tail through the hole. Using a slipknot, attach the tassel to the bookmark.

*Note:* You may need to demonstrate how to do this.

# Pressed Flower Note Cards

## Project 3

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### Supplies and Tools

burnishing tools (1 for each participant)  
craft knives  
glue sticks  
ink pads  
phone books  
rubber stamps (letter stamps come in handy)  
scissors  
scrapbooking punches

markers  
newspaper  
packing tape (clear)  
pencils  
scrapbooking scissors  
Styrofoam trays  
tape dispensers (at least 1 for every 2 people in the group)  
tissues or makeup sponges

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### Materials

blank note cards  
card stock  
pressed flowers (see how-to below)  
scrapbooking vellum pages

vellum pages with quotations or words (available in some craft stores)

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### Step 1: Rummaging and Planning

Rummage through the flowers and other embellishing materials. Once you have your cards, flowers, and vellums (if needed), you're ready to plan. You'll want to play around with the layout to see what you like before you stick anything down.

The cards will look better if they aren't completely covered by tape. Also, keep this tip in mind: the fewer tape seams, the better. Tape seams can be the beginning of a lot of problems. If the tape doesn't meet up at the seam all the way, the flower will crack apart there. If the seam develops a wrinkle, it can be impossible to get that wrinkle out. So plan your work accordingly.

Here are a few design tips:

Card stock in a contrasting color and cut into a nice shape can work well as a backdrop and add dimension to your design.

Grouping flowers or leaves by size or color can create good patterns.

If you're planning to cover the entire face of the card and flower with vellum, check to make sure enough of the detail will show through.

Large flowers or leaves look better placed singly on a card.

Smaller flowers or leaves can be used singly or grouped at an edge or in a corner.

If you want to use any of the vellum quotes or plan to stamp words onto your card, be sure to plan for that in your layout.

Keep in mind that your flowers and leaves don't always have to be "flowers" or "leaves." With the right shape and a little imagination, you can use them to suggest butterflies or fairies.

### Step 2: Sticking

Once you have a layout you like, you're ready to stick things down. There are three basic techniques for this step and each has variations.

#### STICKING ONTO CARD STOCK

If you're planning to make a lot of cards, this is the easiest technique to assembly-line. Cut your card stock to size and shape using the scrapbook edging scissors or by carefully ripping or even using straight-edge scissors,

## Pressed Flower Note Cards

depending on the effect you want. Then use the glue stick to put a small amount of glue only on the area where the flower is to be. This glue is only to hold the flower in place while you tape it down, so you don't need a lot. Next, take a strip of packing tape. Working horizontally, gently place the tape over the flower. The tape should cover the flower but be securely on the card stock as well. The tape should overlap the flower at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. Handle the tape gingerly and as precisely as possible. The dried flowers can be very delicate. Repeat this process of taping until the flower is completely taped to the card stock. Once it's covered, use the craft knife to trim off any rough edges of tape before burnishing the tape down.

This technique works well for large arrangements of many flowers or plants that spread out across the card. For these larger arrangements, you may want to use a larger piece of card stock than you need and cover it completely. Once the tape is burnished down, you can trim around your arrangement.

Once you're finished trimming the card stock, use the glue stick to glue it onto the note card.

### STICKING DIRECTLY ONTO THE NOTE CARD

This process is almost the same as sticking the flower to the card stock, but it's a little riskier—if you make a mistake, you sacrifice an entire card. Once you have the flower in place on the front of the note card, use the glue stick to put a small amount of glue only on the area where the flower is to be. This glue is only to hold the flower in place while you tape it down, so you don't need a lot. Working horizontally, gently place a strip of packing tape over the flower. The tape should cover the flower but be securely on the note card as well. The tape should overlap the flower by at least  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch. Handle the tape gingerly and as precisely as possible. The dried flowers can be very delicate. Repeat this process of taping

until the flower is completely taped down on the note card. Once it's covered, use the craft knife to trim off any rough edges of tape before burnishing the tape down. This technique is best used only on a small area like corners or edges.

### COVERING WITH VELLUM

This technique works best if you cover the entire face of the card (and flower, of course) with vellum. The vellum is translucent and adds a soft, muted look to the flowers. It comes in many colors and patterns, so you have plenty of options for this look. Keep in mind, though, that vellum-covered cards leave little room for other types of embellishment.

Once you've decided on placement, cut the vellum to size. It should be either exactly the same size as the face of the card or slightly smaller. Use the glue stick to put a small amount of glue only on the area where the flower is to be. Put the flowers in place and press them down gently to secure them. Next, cover one side of the vellum with glue from the glue stick. Then, glue side down, place the vellum over the flowers and onto the card face. Smooth down gently.

### ***Step 3: Embellishing***

There are various techniques for embellishing these cards. You can add words by gluing on quotes or using stamped words or letters. Use the scrapbooking scissors or careful tearing to add interesting edges. You can also use the stamp pad ink with the tissues or sponges to add color and dimension. To highlight the edges with ink, brush an inked tissue or sponge across the edge lightly. Use decorative stamps or scrapbook punches to add shapes and designs.

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## Supplies and Tools

binder clips	cutting board (wood is better)
box cutter	finishing nail (small) and a hammer
brads	hole punches (have as many as possible on hand)
large needle	scissors (straight-edge and scrapbooking)
markers	small cups
paintbrushes	Styrofoam trays
paper cutter (optional)	tape
pen	tissues or makeup sponges
pencils	white glue
rulers	

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## Materials

binding rings	paint (watercolor or acrylic)
card and paper stock	paper scrap
cardboard (thick enough to act as book covers; various textures are nice)	ribbon
decorative papers (wallpaper, wrapping paper, origami paper, etc.)	rubber stamps and ink pads
embroidery floss	stencils and stencil paint
	twine

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## Step 1: Planning and Selecting Materials

Have the participants read the instructions and decide on a plan for their book. They may want to think about how they will use their book and then decide on the size, type of binding, and materials they will need.

Once they have a design in mind, they can go to the materials table to pick out their book covers, paper or card stock, and decorating supplies.

## Step 2: Designing the Covers

This is the chance to be creative and make the book individual to yourself and the book's planned use. You can really do anything you want with the cover. Make it as simple or as complex as you'd like. We'll go over a few basics, but remember that you can mix and match these ideas or even do something else entirely.

### DRAWING OR PAINTING

You can draw or trace a picture onto the cover and paint with watercolor or acrylic paint. Or you can use stencils to create a design. Layer your designs if you'd like, mak-

ing sure to let the paint dry between layers. Also, make sure your covers are completely dry before you go on to binding.

### DECOUPAGING

You can overlay the book cover with words or pictures cut from magazines, books, newspapers, or comics. You can even use less traditional paper scrap, such as wallpaper scraps, wrapping paper, or origami paper. Again, layering can create a nice effect. Let the decoupage medium dry completely before binding.

### STAMPING, USING MARKERS, AND MORE

You can create designs with rubber stamps and stamping ink or markers or both. You can also add interest by using cardboard with different textures. Try combining some of these techniques to create even more detailed designs. Don't forget to decorate the inside of the cover as well!

You can also embellish the pages. Try using scrapbooking scissors to cut different types of edges, or rip the edges. Sponge ink onto the pages or use stencils and rubber stamps to add designs.



## Blank Books

### Step 3: Binding

#### BINDING 1: RING BOUND

Ring binding is the most basic binding short of stapling your book together at the corners. It can be used to good effect, though, depending on how you plan to use the book and where you place the rings.

Decide which edge is going to be the back or bound edge of your covers and your paper stock. Using a ruler, mark the placement of the holes. For consistency and ease of hole punching, do the covers first. Measure in from the edge at least ½ inch but no more than 1 inch (unless you're making a really huge book) and mark this spot. Do this at the top, middle, and bottom of the cover. Draw a line through all three marks. Next, measure along this line to place the marks where the holes should be punched.

Punch the holes in the first cover, and then use it as a guide to mark the other cover and the paper stock.

Remember that the binding is a part of your design, so you should try to add interest with it. For example, rather than doing a standard three-ring bind at even intervals, measure and mark holes for six rings. Or place holes so you'll have two rings close together at the top, one in the middle, and two more close together at the bottom. Also, keep in mind that your book does not have to open left to right. Your binding can be at the top or bottom or even on the right edge.

Once all the pages and the covers are punched, insert the rings and close them. The size of the rings you use will depend on the thickness of your book. Binding rings are the obvious choice, but you don't have to use them. You can also tie through the holes with ribbon or twine, or you can even use shower curtain rings.

#### BINDING 2: SEWN

Once you have your covers and pages designed and you know which edge you are going to bind, stack them in the order you want them to be bound and clip them together tightly with binder clips at the top and bottom. The pages and covers need to be held securely together.

Measure and mark where to put the holes.

With the cutting board underneath the book, use the hammer and finishing nail to make the holes. The holes need to be big enough for the string you plan to use to pass through. This technique works best if you plan to have just a few spots of lacing at the back.

When all the holes have been made, thread a large-eye needle with string and lace through the holes, making sure your lacing is secure. Be sure to leave a tail at the beginning so you can tie it off. Your goal is to go into the first hole, then go through all the others in whatever pattern you prefer, and make it back to the first hole, leaving another tail to tie.

#### BINDING 3: GLUED IN

For a glued-in binding, you bind your pages first and then glue them into the covers with an endpaper. This should be the most familiar example. If you are using this binding method, you can skip the step of decorating the interior of the covers. The endpapers will be your interiors.

Start with your interior pages. Stack them and clip them together with binder clips at the top and bottom. Measure ¼ inch in from the edge to be bound and draw a line down the top page. Next, make marks on the line at 1-inch intervals. Then, with the cutting board under your pages, use the hammer and nail to make holes at your marks.

When all the holes have been made, sew the pages together with embroidery floss.

When the pages are sewn together, prepare your endpapers. To get the dimensions, measure across the front page and add that to the measurement across the front cover. The height will be the same as the height of your interior pages. You'll need two endpapers.

When you have your endpapers cut, fold them in half. Glue one half to the top interior page and the other half to the inside cover. Do this for both covers. Now you should have what looks like a book with no spine.

To add a spine to the book, you can use either a scrap of fabric, a piece of wide ribbon, or even paper scrap. Cut the spine piece to overlap the covers by at least 1 inch. Once you have it cut, glue it in place with decoupage medium or white glue.

If you want to cheat the spine, you can use duct tape.

#### BINDING 4: ACCORDION

Accordion binding works best with small, square books (4 by 4 inches to 6 by 6 inches). The hardest part of this binding technique is making sure you have a piece of paper long enough to make several pages. Large pads of watercolor or other art paper will work well. If you want a lot of pages, you can cut the paper into strips of



## Blank Books

the appropriate width and glue them together end to end.

The pages of this book are part of the binding, so we will go over the instructions here.

The pages should be  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch smaller than the covers. For this example we will be making a 4-by-4-inch book, with pages that will be  $3\frac{1}{2}$  by  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The pages are also one long strip.

To start, take a long strip of paper that is  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide. Mark and fold this strip at  $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch intervals. Snip off any excess paper.

If you want to add more pages, cut another strip of  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-wide paper and fold it in the same way, again snipping off any excess. When you have your two little accordions, match the last fold on one with the first fold

on the other. Glue these two “pages” together. This will give you one long strip of paper with  $3\frac{1}{2}$ -inch folds all the way across.

Glue the first page onto the inside of the front cover and the last page onto the inside of the back cover.

If you don’t like the way the pages look on the inside covers, you can decorate them however you’d like.

Now use the same hammer-and-nail technique from the sewn and glued bindings to add holes to the back edge of the *covers only*. Thread the holes with string or ribbon, and tie.

If you want a little closure for the book, add another set of holes at the front of the book covers and attach a ribbon on each cover to tie the book closed.

# Layered Fabric Collages

## Project 5

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### Supplies and Tools

brushes  
carbon paper  
markers  
pencils  
poster board  
rulers  
scissors  
white glue

### Materials

embellishments  
fabric scraps  
found objects  
paper scraps  
resource pictures or original drawings

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### Step 1: Choosing Your Picture

Have participants choose a picture from the group you've supplied, or have them draw their own. Remember to share the guidelines on what makes a good image for this project to avoid frustrations later, and make sure participants follow them.

### Step 2: Collecting Materials

After participants choose or finish designing their picture and listen to your basic instructions and explanation of the project, give them time to do a preliminary rummage at the materials table. They should pick out their main fabrics, and if they see some found pieces they absolutely have to use, they can lay claim to them.

If you're tight for space, you may have participants rummage two or three at a time. In the meantime, those at the main table can be planning how they want their finished piece to look.

### Step 3: Building the Background

Using the carbon paper, trace the basic background lines of your picture onto the poster board. You don't need to trace the entire picture just yet.

Once you have the background lines (if any) in place, choose your first layer of fabrics. Clip the fabric scraps to fit your background. As you're working with the background, play around with textures or tones. A sky can be made of various tones of blue, white, and gray, or grass can be suggested in a fabric's texture or pattern. Be sure to plan carefully before gluing. Try moving things around or placing them at different angles.

Once you have your fabric where you like it, brush on a light coat of glue and stick the fabric down.

### Step 4: Building Up

Once you have your background glued down, any details of your picture are now covered in fabric. *Don't panic.* This is why you have more than one copy. Looking at your picture, decide what the next layer of the picture

## Layered Fabric Collages

is. This layer should be the larger objects in your picture that are going to be fabric (e.g., houses, words, characters, etc.).

There are two ways to transfer these objects onto your background. You could use the carbon paper and trace the image directly onto the background. Once you have the image traced, cut out your fabric scraps and glue them into place. Or you could trace the image on the fabric scrap(s) you are creating the objects from, cut them out, then glue them onto the background. Allow the piece to dry for a few minutes between layers.

Repeat this layering technique until you have finished all the pieces of your collage that you want to create in fabric. Building up the layers adds texture and dimension to the finished piece. All the main lines of your objects should be fabric.

### ***Step 5: Embellishing***

The smaller details of the collage can now be created with embellishments. Create signs with pictures or words cut from magazines in your paper scrap; fashion clock faces with watches. Beads in any color can be used to highlight and add dimension. You can also use markers to write messages.

# Coasters and Trivets

## Project 6

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### Supplies and Tools

beading or jewelry glue	permanent markers
carbon paper	rulers
masking tape	sandpaper
nail polish remover or tile cleaner	scissors
paintbrushes of various sizes	small paper cups
paper towels	small sponges
pencils	stencils
	Styrofoam trays

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### Materials

for coasters: white or very light colored ceramic wall tiles (4 inches by 4 inches)	decoupage medium embellishments (sequins, small jewels, etc.)
felt	
for trivets: white or very light colored floor tiles (12 inches by 12 inches)	floral marbles
colored craft sand	glass paints
	glitter
	paper scrap
	polyurethane

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### Step 1: Planning the Design

Have the participants plan out their ideas either on paper or mentally so they can choose materials. There are several ways to approach the design of the trivets and coasters. You can use the glass paints to simply paint a free-hand or abstract design, or you may want to stencil the tile. You can also use all paper scrap to produce your design. Of course, you can combine any or all of these techniques to create unique pieces.

Because the paints and decoupage dry quickly, suggest to participants that they plan the designs for each of their pieces at this point.

### Step 2: Choosing Materials

When all the participants have their design(s) planned, they can go to the side table (two to four at a time works best) to select the materials they will use for their project. Remind the teens that they can return to the supply table whenever they need items, so they don't have to take everything for all three pieces right away.

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### Step 3: Prepping the Tiles

Lightly sand the tiles and clean them with the tile cleaner or nail polish remover. This step removes or dulls any finish on the tiles so the paint or decoupage will adhere better.

### Step 4: Choosing Techniques

Your main design can be achieved by using several techniques. You can layer these techniques to get more varied results. For example, decoupage paper scrap, then dull it with a coat of watered-down paint for an aged look. Or stencil a design and highlight areas with glitter or sand. Layering can add more texture and depth to a design.

### PAINTING

Lightly draw your design onto the tile. Remember to keep small details to a minimum. You can do this free-hand or trace a picture using carbon paper.

Once you are satisfied with your drawing, begin filling in with the glass paint. The glass paint is translu-

## Coasters and Trivets

cent and appears too thin when first applied. When the paint is dry, you can add another coat if needed. Another approach is to use a small sponge to blend the color to get a muted effect and soften edges.

For an abstract design, just paint and blend colors until you get the effect you want.

### STENCILING

Choose your stencil and tape it into place with masking tape. Using a large stiff brush, a foam brush, or a sponge, dab paint onto the stencil making sure not to brush the paint. Allow the paint to dry a little and carefully remove the stencil.

### PAPER SCRAP

Choose pictures or words and carefully cut them out. Apply decoupage medium to the tile and then place your pictures. Apply another coat of decoupage medium over the pictures. You can layer the pictures as much as you want.

### COMBINATIONS

Your design may call for the use of some or all of these techniques. This sounds more complicated than it actually is and produces some very creative results. Paint your entire tile to give it a background color (you can use as many colors as you like for this). For example, you might want to use blue for sky or water, green for grass, yellow for the sun, and so on. While the paint dries, choose and cut out pictures from your paper scrap. Decoupage these into place, then add more splashes of paint to add color and interest and to build depth. Or use a stencil over the whole thing.

Remember, as one piece is drying, you can work on the other pieces you have planned.

### **Step 5: Embellishing**

Once you have your base layers painted, decoupage, and/or stenciled, you can add embellishments for your

finishing touches. Embellishments should be simple and relatively flat. It wouldn't do to have a coaster that always overturned your cup of coffee.

Glitter and sand can be very effective for highlighting areas of your design or adding a subtle sparkle. Use them to fill in small areas or trace designs like smoke or clouds. Small sequins or jewels can also be added to give some sparkle and dimension. You can glue the glitter with decoupage, but make sure the rest of the tile is completely dry before sprinkling the glitter on so you can control where it goes. Glue the jewels or sequins down with beading or jewelry glue.

You can make fabulous embellishments by using permanent markers to outline important features of your design or to write words. Simply draw or trace with the marker, being very careful to keep your lines straight and steady.

### **Step 6: Gluing the Bottom**

When the tiles are completed and dry, glue the floral marbles to the bottom to form "feet." Using the beading or jewelry glue, put a floral marble on each corner of the underside of the tile.

If you'd rather not deal with the marbles, you can cut a square of felt slightly smaller than the tile and glue it to the bottom with the beading glue.

### **Step 7: Sealing**

When your tile has dried, brush on a coat of polyurethane. Make sure to do this in a room with good ventilation. Let the first coat dry at least to a tacky finish and then give the tile at least one more coat to seal.

*Note:* If you are pressed for time, you can have the teens end with one coat of polyurethane. After it dries, you can add the second coat and have the coasters or trivets ready to be picked up at a subsequent meeting or at the reference desk.

# Rubber Band Bracelets and Necklaces

## Project 7

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### Supplies and Tools

dowels or pencils (1 for each participant)

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### Materials

beads (must have large holes)  
small rubber bands (the best are the small “no-tangle”  
hair bands that are usually available in packs of 100)

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### Without Bead

#### **Step 1: Beginning the Chain**

Fold a rubber band around the dowel or pencil so you have two loops, one on either side of the dowel.

#### **Step 2: Extending the Chain**

Thread a second rubber band through these two loops and pull it forward so you have another two loops. Essentially you are creating a chain with rubber bands. The dowel will act as an anchor on one end.

Continue adding rubber bands until you get the length of chain that you want (necklace, bracelet, anklet, etc.).

#### **Step 3: Closing the Chain**

When you have the desired length, you're ready to close off your chain. Slip the ends off the dowel or pencil carefully, making sure your chain doesn't unravel. You should have two loops at either end of your chain. Gather all four loops together and thread a new rubber band through all four. Instead of leaving the loops at the

end of this new rubber band, pull one loop through the other to create a knot. Pull tightly. Done!

### Adding a Bead

There are three variations on this project that allow you to add a bead to your bracelet or necklace.

#### **Option 1: Plain Beading**

After your chain has five or six links, carefully thread the beads onto the chain, and then continue with the steps above until finished.

#### **Option 2: Horizontal Beading**

In this variation the bead has to be added at the beginning. If the bead is longer than the rubber bands you're using for the linking process, you may need to use a larger band for this part. Thread a rubber band through the bead. You should have a loop on either side. Thread a second rubber band through one side and pull both ends so you have two loops. Slide these loops onto your

## Rubber Band Bracelets and Necklaces

dowel to use as an anchor. Thread another band through the loop at the other end and continue building your chain as explained above.

Because you'll want the bead to end up in the front center of your bracelet or necklace, build the chain to reach half the distance needed, then tie it off temporarily. Slide the other side off the dowel or pencil and build the chain in the other direction until you have the same number of links on either side of the bead. When you're done with both sides, tie the whole piece off in the manner described above.

### ***Option 3: Vertical Beading***

In this variation the bead has to be added at the beginning. Thread a rubber band through the bead, leaving a loop on either side. Pull the ends forward so you have two loops, one on the top and one on the bottom of the bead. Thread a second rubber band through these loops and slide the loops of this second rubber band onto your dowel or pencil to use as an anchor. Thread another band through the bead so you have two rubber bands through the hole. Again, pull the ends so you have two loops and thread another band through these. Build the chain in the same manner as before.

Because you'll want the bead to end up in the front center of your bracelet or necklace, build the chain to reach half the distance needed, then tie it off temporarily. Slide the other side off the dowel or pencil and build the chain in the other direction until you have the same number of links on either side of the bead. When you're done with both sides, tie the whole piece off in the manner described above.

### **Add-ons (optional)**

When you have your bracelet or necklace tied off, you can add additional beads and links for a dangling or charm-bracelet effect.

To do this, take the tail of the tie-off band and use the same technique to tie another band to it. Once you have it as long as you want, slide some beads on. Make a knot at the end big enough to stop the beads from coming off.



# Mosaic Tile Jewelry

## Project 8

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### Supplies and Tools

beading or jewelry glue  
beading needles  
containers (small mint tins with lids are perfect)  
craft knives and/or small scissors (cuticle scissors work well)  
decoupage medium  
foam brushes  
paint pens (the ones specifically for glass and tile)  
pencils  
pliers or tweezers  
polyurethane varnish (clear)  
scissors (regular size)  
Styrofoam trays  
water in small containers

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### Materials

assorted beads  
jewelry clasps (optional)  
jewelry cording  
mosaic tiles, 1 inch by 1 inch (you need the ones with grooves along the back)  
paper scrap to decoupage (discarded comics, catalogs, children's books—anything with small images)  
pin backs  
small embellishments (sequins or jewels)  
stretchy beading cord

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## Session 1

### Step 1: Collecting Images

Leaf through the paper scraps and find an image that you like and that will fit on the tile. Cut around the image. If you need to, use a tile to draw a square pattern and cut along the outline. Put the image aside in your small container. Keep in mind that you can also cut out words to use.

If you want to forgo the paper scrap and design your tile from scratch, use the paint pens and draw directly onto the tiles.

Think of this phase as building a collective pool of cool images for the group to use later.

### Step 2: Decoupage

When you have the supply of images you need, you're ready to start decoupage. Brush a light coat of decoupage medium onto the tile. Place your image on the tile. The decoupage medium stays wet long enough for you to move the image around if you need to. Once you have the image placed where you want it, brush on another coat of decoupage medium. Put aside to dry.

As you're decoupage, think about how the tile will be used. The grooves on the back of the tile will need to align for stringing later. For bracelets, the grooves should go side to side, whereas for necklaces or complex pins, the grooves should go up and down.

While your first tile is drying, you can make more tiles exactly the same way.

### Step 3: Sealing

When all your tiles are decoupage and dry (drying should take about fifteen to twenty minutes), use a clean brush to add a light coat of polyurethane varnish. Let dry for about twenty to thirty minutes. The polyurethane doesn't need to dry completely, but it should be dry enough to touch without leaving fingerprints.

### Step 4: Finishing

When the tiles are dry enough to touch, glue them back-to-back with the grooves running parallel to each other. Try to keep the grooves as clear of glue as possible so you can run cord through later. Tiles can be glued together as pairs, so each side has an image, or back-to-back with blanks.

## Mosaic Tile Jewelry

When all the tiles are glued, leave to dry at least twenty-four hours. This is the end of the first session.

### Session 2

You can make several different types of jewelry with your tiles. Each type will have its own special steps, so decide what you want to make first. It's best to complete one piece before starting another.

#### Bracelets

##### STEP 1: DESIGNING

Using the stretchy string, measure your wrist. The stretch in the string will allow the bracelet to slip over your hand but fit snugly on your wrist without the stretch. Before cutting, add some extra length to tie a knot to close the bracelet at the end. You'll need at least 3 inches extra. You'll need two strands of stretchy string cut to the same length. When you have the string cut, lay it out flat on your workspace and start laying out your tiles and beads. Because the tiles have two grooves, you'll need two strings to stabilize them, but this also means they work well for double-strand bracelets as well. For a double-strand look, plan your layout accordingly.

*Tip:* Bracelets look best with one or two tiles per bracelet.

##### STEP 2: ASSEMBLING

Leaving a 1½-inch tail, tie the two strands together. Choose a beading needle, making sure it fits through the beads you're working with. Thread one or both of the strands through the beading needle, depending on whether you have a single- or double-strand layout. String the beads as your layout dictates. If you're using different-size beads, you may need to change your beading needle as you go.

##### STEP 3: TYING OFF

Once you have your bracelet beaded, double-check the fit around your wrist before tying off. You may find that you need to add or remove a few beads. When the length is correct, tie both strands into a secure knot. The stretchy string can be slippery, so you may need to double your knot. Make sure the beads don't pass the knot. You should have at least 1½ inches of string at the end.

##### STEP 4: CLOSING AND FINISHING

Tie the tails together twice, making sure to pull the knots tight and secure. You may want to secure the knot with a dab of glue.

##### STEP 5: EMBELLISHING (OPTIONAL)

To add extra flash or flair to your pieces, glue small sequins or jewels to the faces of the tiles. As you're gluing make sure to use just a small dab of glue to hold the jewel or sequin in place.

#### Necklaces

##### STEP 1: DESIGNING

Cut the cord to the desired length, leaving room for knotting or adding a clasp. Once you have your string cut, lay out your tile and/or bead pattern.

##### STEP 2: ASSEMBLING

If you're planning a fully beaded necklace, knot one end of the cord, leaving a tail long enough to tie the necklace around your neck, or add a clasp later. Choose a beading needle, making sure it fits through the beads you're working with. Thread the cord through the beading needle. If your necklace is a simple pendant design, string the tiles and beads as you have them laid out. Keep in mind that knots in the cord can be quite decorative as well.

##### STEP 3: TYING OFF

If you have a fully beaded design, tie off the end with a secure knot that's big enough to stop the beads from falling off. Be sure to leave another tail at this end to tie the necklace on, or add a clasp.

##### STEP 4: CLOSING AND FINISHING

If you're adding a clasp, simply tie the ends of the string to the wire loops on the clasp. These loop attachments may look slightly different depending on the type of clasp you are using, but the string should tie in essentially the same way on most types.

##### STEP 5: EMBELLISHING (OPTIONAL)

To add extra flash or flair to your pieces, glue small sequins or jewels to the faces of the tiles. Make sure to use just a small dab of glue to hold the jewel or sequin

## Mosaic Tile Jewelry

in place.

### ***Pins***

#### **STEP 1: DESIGNING**

Plan your pin with any beads or tiles you'll want to use. Once you have your layout established, cut the cord that will hold the piece together. The cord will loop through the design in a U shape. Make sure to leave enough extra cord to tie your knots.

#### **STEP 2: ASSEMBLING**

For a simple pin of a single tile, glue a pin back to the back of the tile, let dry, and you're done. You can even do this without gluing the tiles back-to-back—a good use for any stray tiles that don't have a partner.

For a dangling pin, knot one end of the cord. Choose a beading needle, making sure it fits through the beads

you're working with. Thread the cord through the beading needle. Add your beads and tiles according to your layout. When you get to the top of the design, loop the cord into a U shape and travel down the other side of your layout. Keep in mind that knots can be decorative as well.

#### **STEP 3: TYING OFF**

For a dangling pin, tie off the end to make sure the beads won't slip over. Trim the tails.

#### **STEP 4: FINISHING**

Glue a pin back (bar or clutch) to the back of the top tile and let dry.

#### **STEP 5: EMBELLISHING (OPTIONAL)**

To add extra flash or flair to your pieces, glue small sequins or jewels to the faces of the tiles. Make sure to use just a small dab of glue to hold the jewel or sequin in place.

# Woven Paper Baskets

## Project 9

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### Supplies and Tools

burnishing tools (1 for each participant)  
masking-tape  
packing-tape dispensers  
place mats (plastic or vinyl)  
scissors (1 for each participant)

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### Materials

packing tape (thicker gauge, at least 2 inches wide)  
paper scrap

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### Step 1: Choosing Your Pages

Leaf through the paper scrap, pulling out pages with images that jump out at you. Keep an eye out for color, texture, and small details. Because the pages are going to be cut in half, then folded, then woven, full images won't be preserved, so you're looking for images that will be interesting in pieces. Keep in mind that it's possible to plan out themes of color or texture. It's fine if you end up with raw edges along the ripped side of the page.

The number of pages you'll need will depend on how narrowly you fold the strips and how big you want your basket. Baskets with large bottoms are not as sturdy as baskets with smaller bottoms and should therefore be shorter. Baskets with small bottoms can go higher with less structural difficulty, but they allow a smaller space to weave as they get taller.

For our example, we are going to use strips that are about ½ inch wide and will make a smallish basket with a bottom of 5 strips by 6 strips. For this basket, we used about 30 strips.

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### Step 2: Folding

Fold and crease the page in half lengthwise. Tear or cut along the fold so you end up with two pieces of about equal size.

Taking one of the halves, fold at the edge lengthwise about ½ inch. Crease tightly with your burnishing tool. Fold and crease again and again until you have a ½-inch strip of folded paper. Use your burnishing tool to make sure the folds are as tight as they can be.

Repeat this process with all your pages.

*Note:* Although we're using ½-inch strips here, you can fold the pages into wider or thinner strips. If you choose wider strips, you may need to use an entire page rather than a half, and your finished basket may be less sturdy.

### Step 3: Laminating with Packing Tape

Laminating the strips with packing tape is easy. Start by laying a strip out in front of you horizontally. It's a good idea to use a vinyl or plastic place mat to tape on. You can easily pick up the tape if you need to move it around

## Woven Paper Baskets

or if it sticks to the mat, and you'll be able to move your work around at different angles. If there is a seam on one side of the strip, face that up. Pull a length of tape from the dispenser that is slightly longer than the paper strip (about ¼ inch should do). Holding the tape horizontally by the edges, lay it as straight as you can onto the strip. Press the tape down firmly, then fold it over the sides until the strip is entirely covered in tape. Snip the tape ends closer to the paper. Now use the burnishing tool to flatten out any air bubbles and seal the tape securely.

Repeat this for each of the paper strips.

If you are using wider strips, you may need to use more than one strip of tape. Make sure to overlap the edges of the strips to get full coverage.

*Note:* If you have a laminating machine at your library, you can use it for this project, but be warned: you'll go through a lot of supplies.

### Step 4: Weaving

#### BOTTOM/BASE

Laying strips out next to each other will help you determine how wide your basket will be. When you have the size of your basket in mind, you're ready to lay out your strips and prep them for weaving. To begin, assemble the strips that will form the bottom and frame of your basket. The frame and the bottom need strips that are twice as long as the ones you'll weave the sides with, so tape two strips together for every strip you need. These strips should be about the same length and width, so keep this in mind when you choose which strips to use.

For our example, the bottom is 6 strips by 5 strips, so including doubling their length, we'll need to start with 22 strips.

When you have all your strips taped together, lay 6 out vertically on your vinyl place mat. They should all be lined up evenly from top to bottom, and placed right next to each other edge to edge. Use a strip of masking tape to tape the strips to the place mat along the top ends.

Weave your first strip, over and under, across the center of the vertical strips. (You should be able to easily spot the center at the point where you taped the two strips together.) Once you have the center strip in place and with

even tails on either side, complete the bottom by adding the rest of the strips evenly on either side. For ours, we're adding two more strips above the center and two below.

When all the bottom strips are in place, check that the center strip is still in the center. If it isn't, get it back to where it needs to be. Push and adjust the rest of the strips so your weave is tight with no gaps.

When you're satisfied with the weave, use a small piece of tape to secure each corner.

#### SIDES

With the bottom secured, begin the sides by folding up the tail edges all along the bottom. Crease the folds well, using the burnishing tool if you need to.

These tails are going to be the frame for your sides. When all of them are folded up, take another strip and tuck its end under the middle frame strip on one side at the bottom. Use a small piece of tape to secure it. Weave the strip in through the rest of the side. When you get to the corner, crease the weaving strip so it will turn the corner more smoothly, and then continue around the corner. When you have the strip completely woven through, go back and push it down, making sure the weaving is tight. Then secure it with tape at the corner and at the end. Begin the next strip where the previous one left off and continue with the same technique.

When you have woven all the way around and come back to the beginning of your first strip, tuck the tail for a neater look or clip it away if you have a lot of excess. Weave the subsequent rows in the same way, building your basket to the desired height.

#### FINISHING THE TOP

When you finish the sides, the tails of the frame strips will still be sticking out from the tops. These should be about 2 inches long. With the side strips secured with tape and the weaving tight, you can now secure the top edge. To do this, fold the top tail over the top strip and tuck it under the strip second from the top. Some of the top tails will fold out and some will fold in. You may need to use your burnishing tool to tuck the ends under. If a tail seems loose, use a small piece of tape to secure it.

Once all the tails are tucked in, your basket is finished!

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## Supplies and Tools

binder clips  
burnishing tools or  
wooden craft sticks  
cardboard (lightweight) or  
heavy card stock  
containers to sort  
materials  
embroidery floss and  
needles  
glue sticks  
hole punches (heavy-duty)  
packing tape (high-  
quality) with dispenser  
pens or pencils  
rulers  
scissors  
Styrofoam trays  
thimbles

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## Materials

buttons, snaps, beads for closures and embellishments  
clear vinyl (available at fabric stores) or a clear vinyl  
shower curtain  
heavy cording  
leather or plastic cord or embroidery floss for lacing the  
panels together  
pictures to create the panels; 10 pictures per bag (Look  
for pictures in recycled calendars; magazines [the  
heavy, glossy travel or fashion magazines work best];  
and garden, nature, animal, or children's picture  
books that are worn and on the "throw away" list.  
Book dust jackets, comic book or graphic novel  
pages, photos, large postcards, posters, or large  
graphic magazine inserts also work well.)  
ribbon and/or strapping for the handles

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## Step 1: Choosing Materials

*Read all the instructions first!*

Have two or three teens at a time go to the side table to choose their pictures, strap and lacing materials, vinyl, and closures and embellishments and take them back to their places. Each participant will need ten pictures, two for each panel.

## Step 2: Laying Out the Design

Choose your largest pictures for the front and back panels of the tote. Your choices will determine the final size of your tote. Trim your pictures as needed to make them neat and even (use your ruler). You should end up with four pieces for the front and back. Choose which pictures you want to be facing out and which to face in. Then put the pictures aside.

*Tip:* Look at your pictures closely and center them so that the best part or color of the picture shows and is framed well.

Cut your side panels as tall as the front and back panels. Then cut the width of the side panels to, at most, half the size of the front and back panels. It's very important that both of the side panels are the same size, so you may want to cut them at the same time. Again, you will end up with four pieces for your side panels. As with the front and back, choose which images should be facing inside and which should be facing out. Line them up and set aside.

Cut the bottom panels. These should be as long as the front and back panels and as wide as the sides. You will end up with two pieces for the bottom. Again, choose which image should be facing up into the inside of the tote and which will face down outside.

Take a quick measurement to make sure all your panels will match up.

## Step 3: Forming Panels

Glue the pictures for each piece of each panel together, back-to-back. If you are using pictures on lightweight



## Vinyl Totes

paper, you will want to reinforce them with thin cardboard. Measure and cut the cardboard to the same size as the pictures. Glue the pictures onto the cardboard.

Make sure each image is facing in the right direction!

### **Step 4: Planning Your Handles**

Decide if you want long handles for a shoulder bag or shorter handles for a shopping or purse-type bag. Using the cord, ribbon, or other strap supplies, cut your handles 2 inches longer than the desired length.

You can attach the handles in one of three ways:

1. Arrange the handles centered on the *inside* of the front and back panels allowing for a 2-inch overlap. Glue into place on the inside of the panel and tape over with packing tape.
2. For a single strap or handle, arrange the handle centered on each side panel, glue into place, then tape over with the packing tape.
3. Sew or grommet the handles to the front and back panels or to the side panels. (These handles would be attached to the tote after it is completed.)

### **Step 5: Cutting the Vinyl**

Once the teens have their panels prepared, give them the clear vinyl pieces.

Fold or layer the vinyl. Carefully trace around the edges of the picture panels onto the vinyl and cut on that line. You will need two pieces of vinyl for each panel.

Sandwich the panels between the two pieces of vinyl and lay out to make sure everything fits well.

### **Step 6: Taping**

For this step you will need to clear your space.

Start with the front panel. Line up the picture panels and the two vinyl pieces and clip into place with binder clips. Keep the edges as even as possible.

Pull out a strip of packing tape long enough to cover the top edge of the panel. Lay the tape on the table, sticky side up. Place the panel on top of the tape so that an equal amount of tape will be on each side. Carefully fold the tape over the panel edge and smooth it into place. Watch for wrinkles or air bubbles and smooth the tape down firmly.

Continue taping all edges of the panel, moving the binder clips as needed to hold the pieces together. Check the taped panel and smooth out any wrinkles with your finger or a wooden craft stick.

Tape all the edges on all the panels in this way.

Lay out all the taped panels on the table as they will go together.

### **Step 7: Punching Holes**

Using the premade hole punch guides, determine how many holes you will need to lace your tote together. Line up the hole punch guide on the long side of one of your side panels and use two binder clips to hold it in place.

Get your hand muscles ready and punch each hole through all the layers of the panel. Do the same with the other side, bottom, and front and back panels until complete.

Once you finish, you should have holes on each edge of all your panels, *except* the top edges of the front, back, and side panels. You can do the top edges if you'd like to add lacing for embellishment.

### **Step 8: Lacing**

Line up one of the side panels with the bottom panel along the short edge. Make sure that the bottom panel is indeed lining up with the bottom of your side panel. Thread cord through all the holes on this edge. Tie a knot at the end of the cord (leaving a 2-inch tail) to secure the cord in place without pulling it through behind you.

Once that bottom side edge is laced, bring the back panel into place. Again line up the holes, being careful that your images are facing in the same direction. Carry the lacing over from the bottom/side seam into the first hole on the bottom edge of the back panel. Then with your next loop, lace the bottom edge of the back to the side edge of the bottom. When you get to the end of the back/bottom seam, tie off your lacing securely and clip the cord. Leave a tail to make sure things don't come unraveled. You'll go back and glue the knot at the end.

Next, lace together the back and the other side panel (top to bottom). Again tie a knot at the beginning of your lacing to make sure things stay in place. As you come to the bottom of the seam, lace through the last hole of the back side *and* the first hole of the bottom panel. Continue lacing along the bottom, and then up the other side of the side panel, bringing the front into place.



## Vinyl Totes

Next, going into the finish, lace the bottom of the front panel to the long side of the bottom panel, then continue up, lacing the front to the opposite side.

As you go, be mindful of the length of your cord. You can tie a section off as you go and pick up with a new strand, but you should try not to do so in the middle of a panel edge.

### ***Step 9: Attaching Closures***

If you want to put a closure on your tote, here are three ways to do this:

1. Punch a hole in the center of both the back and front panels. Tie lengths of cording to each hole, and use as a tie closure.
2. Sew a large snap to the center of the front and back panels.
3. Punch a hole at the top center of the back panel. Thread a sturdy piece of yarn or string through the hole so both ends are on the inside of the bag, with a loop of yarn on the outside. Tie the ends in a large knot so the yarn won't slip through the hole (it may take more than one knot). This creates the loop portion of your closure. On the opposite panel, sew a large button on the outside of the bag. The loop of yarn should slide securely over the button for the closure.

# J-shirt Reconstruction

## Project 11

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### Supplies and Tools

basic sewing supplies  
measuring tape  
seam ripper  
sewing machine (technically optional, but will make your life much easier)  
straight edge or ruler (1 for each participant)  
tailor's chalk (1 for each participant)

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### Materials

embellishments  
fabric and other scrap clothing to use for spare parts  
T-shirts (good to have long- and short-sleeve varieties available)

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The first step for all these techniques is to *try your shirt on*. Look carefully at your shirt and think about what you like about it and what you don't like about it. Check the fit—does it need to be tighter or looser? Is there a logo or design on the front that you want to preserve? Is it too long? Too short? Decide how you want to reconstruct your shirt before you cut or sew.

Look through the directions for each technique to get a sense of what you want to do.

### Technique 1: Lacing (No Sew!)

*Extra materials/supplies/tools: grommet pliers and grommets; ribbon, cording, or some other lacing material.*

Lacing will add a more fitted and feminine look to a T-shirt and give you some options on how to accessorize a look. Lace with delicate ribbon for a softer, bohemian look, or lace with leather cording for a sassier, punky look.

### PLANNING

To begin, you need to decide a few things:

Where will you put your lacing? The location of your lacing will directly affect the fit of your shirt. If you want your shirt to cinch in and be really structured but you

have a lot of extra shirt, you should do two lacings, one on either side. For easy adjustability, you should have one lacing up the back of the shirt. If you're feeling funky and you want to really play with the look, you can plan your lacing to go across the front of your shirt. Or you could add lacing to the sleeves, or one in the front and one in the back. It's a versatile technique that can be a nice decorative feature.

How far apart will you put your grommets down the line? And how far apart will your rows of grommets be? The spacing of the grommets will affect how tightly and how evenly you will be able to lace. Wide-set grommets work well if your lacing is mainly for decoration. Close-set lacing will give you more control over the cinch and fit of your shirt. For the spacing from grommet to grommet down the line, we recommend no more than 2½ inches and no less than ½ inch. For the placement across the line, no more than 6 inches and not less than 3 inches. Of course, if the lacing is purely decorative, you can deviate from these measurements to your heart's content.

How long should your lacing be? Lacing from collar to bottom hem can be striking, but it is not usually a practical solution for fit.

## T-shirt Reconstruction

### MEASURING AND MARKING

For this example we are going to do one lacing up the back of our shirt from the bottom hem to midback with close-set grommets. We are going to have our grommets 1 inch apart down the line and our rows separated by 6 inches.

Lay the shirt out flat on the table, face down. You'll need to draw guidelines with tailor's chalk to mark the placement of the grommets. Start by finding the centerline for the grommets. To do so, measure across the back of the shirt at about midsleeve seam height and divide by two. Using the straight edge, draw a line at that point all the way from the collar to the bottom hem.

Divide the row separation measurement (6 inches) by two. Measure and mark this distance (3 inches) from the centerline on either side. Repeat this at the top, middle, and bottom of your centerline to have as exact a guide as possible. Draw your guidelines on either side, and you should have a pattern on your shirt that looks like the picture in the upper-left corner.

Now you need to mark exactly where the grommets will go. Line up your straight edge across the shirt at roughly the height of the shoulder blade. Make a small mark across each of the two guidelines. Then measure down from that mark in 1-inch increments, marking the spots for all the grommets in each row. Now our shirt looks like the picture in the upper-right corner.

Now, pinch up the fabric at each of these points and use the grommet pliers to insert grommets.

### FINISHING

When all the grommets are in place, use a damp cloth to wipe away your chalk marks. If that doesn't work you may need to rinse the shirt in water or wash it and let it dry before lacing.

After the marks are cleaned away, lace (like a shoe) and you are done.

### **Technique 2: Snip-Tying (No Sew!)**

Snip-tying is a really useful, quick way to alter a T-shirt on the fly. It can be quite decorative and adds texture as well as design. It does subtly alter the fit of a shirt, so keep that in mind when snipping your tighter tees.

Our example is going to work a Y design into the back of our shirt, but this technique can work almost anywhere.

### MEASURING AND CUTTING

Start by laying the shirt out on the table, face down. Measure across to find the center and mark with chalk. Using a straight edge, draw in the lines of the design.

Now we have our Y in place and it's time to cut. Because we have a design that would come away from the shirt if we cut completely, we're going to start with cutting only the middle line and one of the arms of our Y.

Next, along both raw sides of the cut, snip into the fabric so you end up with a fringe along both edges. The depth of these cuts affects the fit of your shirt. You need at least 1½ inches to tie them off well, but if your shirt is really big, feel free to make the cuts longer. Here we used about 2 inches. There is no need to be precise.

### FINISHING

When the entire fringe is cut, go back and tie the two edges together with the fringe. Work your way all the way up until the entire seam is tied.

For our example we repeated the process on the other arm of the Y and then we were done.

### **Technique 3: Razoring (No Sew!)**

*Extra materials/supplies/tools: sharp razor or very sharp small scissors; thick cardboard.*

Razoring involves adding cuts close together to add pattern and texture to a T-shirt that can then be layered over another shirt. You can use razoring to make simple shapes (circles, squares, hearts, etc.) or to go all the way across the back or front of the shirt. Depending on the shapes you use, this can be a very guy-friendly reconstruction.

### DESIGNING

Start by laying the shirt out flat on the table with the part to be razored facing up. If you're using a razor, put the thick cardboard inside the shirt so you don't cut through the other side of the shirt. Use tailor's chalk to sketch out your design. Remember, if you make a mistake with the chalk, you can just rub it away with a damp rag.

## T-shirt Reconstruction

### CUTTING

Once you're satisfied with the pattern, you're ready to cut. For our example we traced out a simple flower design.

If you're using the razor, *be very careful*. Make sure you hold the razor safely and pay close attention as you work. Stretch the T-shirt tightly against the cardboard, and cut across your design. Start at the top of the design and move down, cutting lines inside the design as you go. Space your cuts about  $\frac{1}{4}$  to  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch apart. *Do not cut around the edges of the design.*

If you are doing this technique with a group, use scissors rather than a razor. Cutting with scissors will be easier and will give you more control, although the cut edges will look less raw than the razor cuts.

Once the design is filled in with cuts, you're done.

### **Technique 4: Franken-shirting**

*Extra materials/supplies/tools: at least 2 T-shirts; spare parts from other pieces of clothing; straight pins.*

Franken-shirting is the art of cutting apart different shirts and reassembling them into a new design. This can be as basic as swapping the sleeves or collar from one shirt to another or as complex as creating a patchwork T-shirt from several shirts. You can create some unique fashions, especially if you bring in other types of shirts. For example, you can add the cuffs, collar, and button-up pieces of a dress shirt to a long-sleeve tee and end up with a classy look. This is another guy-friendly technique.

For our example we're going to work on a patchwork tee made from four shirts of about the same size. As an added bonus we'll reassemble each of the shirts and end up with four versions of our patchwork shirt.

### PLANNING AND DESIGNING

This technique takes a closer look at deconstruction and planning. You may want to try a few rough sketches of your ideas so you know how to cut and where to sew to get what you want. Also, take time to look at how each piece you're using is constructed and plan how you want to take it apart. Some pieces may work better if you take them off with the seam ripper rather than cutting. Pay extra attention to collars and sleeves.

### CUTTING AND ASSEMBLING

Once you have your design firmly in mind, turn your shirts inside out and lay them out to be cut. If you're just cutting and replacing selected parts (sleeves, collars, pockets, etc.), you can remove them from each piece individually.

For our example we're stacking the shirts to make sure we cut pieces roughly the same size and shape. For greater precision, we marked where we plan to cut on the top shirt. Carefully cut the pieces out and pin the layers together. Try to leave the pieces generally in the places they will go.

Once you have all your cuts made, choose which to use and reassemble, pinning the pieces together. Pin everything together to make sure your pieces fit correctly. Once you're sure everything will go back together, remove enough pins so you're dealing with three or four large pieces, each with two or three seams to sew. This will make the project more manageable at the sewing machine.

Sew the seams together, assembling the pieces into a whole shirt.

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## Supplies and Tools

heavy paper or poster board cut into pattern template (4 pieces, 1 set for each participant):  
front/back: 24-by-18-inch rectangle  
top: 5½-by-24-inch rectangle  
pocket: 6½-by-4½-inch rectangle  
straps: 4-by-19½-inch strips

iron and ironing board  
needles  
pencils  
scissors  
sewing machine  
yardstick

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## Materials

embellishments  
fabric (about 1 yard total for each participant)  
threads  
twin-size pillow (1 for each participant)

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## Step 1: Designing

This is the time to think about the design and theme of the pillow. Participants may want to draw a simple sketch or just have an idea in mind. Teens can take their inspiration from their favorite things or, if they are making the pillow for a friend, choose a theme to fit her or his personality and likes.

Flowers and gardening themes, animals, superheroes, cartoon characters—all can be worked into these pillows. So many types of fabrics and patterns are available that it will be easy to make book pillows for everyone on the teens' gift lists. Just remind participants that they will want to make each pillow fun and inviting.

Teens can also take inspiration from a favorite fabric they would like to reuse. Denim from a worn-out pair of jeans or skirt, cotton from a soft, lacy top, velvet or silk from a much-loved dress—all would make excellent material for pockets, tops, or straps. Tablecloths, curtains, or even soft towels could be used for the front and back of the pillow. A pillow made entirely from a fancy beach towel would be a great summer reading gift for a favorite beach bum.

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## Step 2: Preparing the Fabric

Wash, dry, and iron the fabric as needed. Lay out the fabric on a large cutting area and pin the pattern in place. If you're using poster board, carefully trace the pattern onto the fabric.

Cut out the following pieces:

- two 24-by-18-inch rectangles for the front and back of the pillow (use your main fabric)
- two 4-by-19½-inch rectangles for the straps
- one 6½-by-4½-inch rectangle for the pocket
- one 5½-by-24-inch rectangle for the top

Use coordinating or recycled fabrics for the smaller pieces to enhance your theme or design.

## Step 3: Pressing

Press the fabric for the straps by folding ¼ inch in on each side of the fabric. Press well so that it stays in place, then fold this in half and press again (pin if needed to keep it in place). Press out the pocket and fold down about ¼ inch for the top hem. Fold ⅛ inch around the

## Book Pillows

pocket's outer edges and press well (pin if needed to keep in place). Press the top piece, making a ¼-inch hem at the bottom. Press well (pin if needed). Press the pillow front and back.

### **Step 4: Sewing**

Set up the sewing machine and thread with matching or coordinating thread.

Sew the straps at the folded edges. You can use a simple straight stitch or a decorative stitch depending on your fabric and the look you want.

Sew the pocket's top hem. If you want to add a decorative trim at the top, this is the time to do it. You could use binding tape or lace ribbon. Sew around the pocket edges. You may want to add other small embellishments such as fabric appliqués or decorative stitching to the pocket to enhance your theme.

Lay out the front of the pillow on the table and place the pocket on the right side about 1½ inches from the bottom and 5½ inches from the right side. Line up the pocket as straight as possible and pin into place. Sew the pocket in place.

Lay out the front of the pillow again and place the straps on the left side. Place the first strap ¾ inches from the side, and place the next strap 3½ inches from the first strap. (*Note:* You want the straps to be a bit loose so that a book can slide in.) Check for alignment and adjust if necessary. Pin in place at the top and bottom, but don't sew them down. The straps will get sewn when you sew the back and front together.

Place the top piece right side down onto the front piece; place the back piece right side down onto this and pin together. Again, this piece will get sewn into place when the front and back are sewn together.

Sew these pieces together at the top, the right side, and the bottom of the pillow.

Stuff with the twin-size pillow. This will be a tight fit so you will need to wiggle the pillow in, straightening as you go. If you're not careful to keep the pillow straight as you stuff, your pocket or straps can go out of alignment.

Hand sew the left side of the pillow with a tight running stitch.

Done!! Snuggle up with a good book! If your pillow is a gift, add a bookmark or book light to the pocket.