

Arts & Crafts



Illustration by Mark Ricketts, from Happy Birthday, Maine by Lynn Plourde (courtesy of Down East Books)

Did you know?

Every time your child does a fingerplay such as the *Itsy Bitsy Spider*, they are working on their fine motor skills which will help them when it comes time to use scissors, crayons, and pencils. Fingerplays also teach many other early literacy skills, as well as being fun!

Why Arts & Crafts?

- › They help develop fine motor skills.
- › They help teach literacy skills, such as listening and vocabulary.
- › They can help teach math concepts such as shapes, counting, and sorting.
- › They encourage creativity and imagination!
- › They can build confidence and self-esteem.
- › They create quality time together.

See <https://activity-box.com/6-reasons-why-art-and-crafts-are-so-important-for-child-development> for more information.

Bubble Blowing Solution

3 cups water
1 cup liquid dish detergent
1 tbsp. sugar

Instructions:

Combine ingredients well. Dip bubble wand in and blow. To make a bubble wand you can bend a pipe cleaner, wire or wire hanger into shape. For colored solution, add food coloring.

Play Dough

1 cup flour
1 cup water
2 tsp. cream of tartar
1/3 cup salt
1 Tb. vegetable oil
food coloring

Instructions:

In a saucepan, mix flour, cream of tartar and salt. Add water and vegetable oil. Turn burner on medium/low and stir. Before it thickens, add food coloring and stir. Continue stirring until it separates from pan and no longer looks wet. Remove and put on wax paper until it cools. Knead cooled dough and store in plastic bag.

Beaded Bracelet

1 pipe cleaner
Assorted beads

Instructions:

Bend the end of the pipe cleaner so that the beads will not fall off. Show your child how to thread the beads onto the pipe cleaner. Encourage them to make a color pattern or to count the beads. Once the pipe cleaner is almost full, bend the two ends together to make a bracelet.

Salt Dough

1 cup of fine salt
1 cup of flour
1/2 cup of water (may add more)

Instructions:

In a large bowl, combine the salt and the flour. Make a well in the salt/flour mixture and add the water. Knead until smooth and shape into a ball. When not in use, wrap in plastic or store in an airtight container.

HINT: To get a softer dough you can add more flour. Add more salt to get more texture. To add color to your dough, add food coloring or paint. Knead to get an even color.

Sock Puppet

1 old, mismatched light colored sock
Glue
Construction paper
Yarn
Markers

Instructions:

Have your child put the sock on their hand to see how it would work as a puppet. Help them decide what kind of puppet they would like to make. Using glue, paper, markers, yarn and any other craft supplies you might have, create a face and hair for the puppet. Once it is finished, your child can give their new sock puppet a name and use it to tell a story.

Paper Plate Mask

Paper plates
Construction paper
Scissors
Markers
String
Glue

Instructions:

Cut two circles out of the paper plate for your eyes. Decorate the paper plate with crayons, markers, colored pencils, or even cut outs from magazines. Use construction paper to cut out shapes for ears, trunk, or nose. Using scissors or a hole punch, make two small holes near the side of the plate to attach string. Pull the string and make a knot, then take both pieces to tie around the back of your child's head. Be creative with what you have to decorate the mask. Stickers, pieces of fabric, feathers, or other items make great decorations.

Binoculars

2 toilet paper tubes or 1 paper towel tube
Yarn
Markers, crayons or stickers
Tape
Holepunch or scissors

Instructions:

Tape the two toilet paper tubes together. If using a paper towel tube, cut it in half and tape two pieces together. Make a small hole in each side and tie string around to make a necklace. Decorate tubes with markers, crayons or stickers. Once completed, ask your child to describe what they see when they use their binoculars.