

THE CRAFTY GRANDPARENT

Many of us would love to do handcrafts with the children in our lives but we have no idea where to start. In this workshop we will explore a variety of crafts and have fun in the process! At each session the participants will make two to four crafts appropriate for a variety of ability levels. Participants will contribute about \$30 (\$3/session) toward consumables that will be provided by the moderator. In addition, participants will assemble a tool kit:

YOUR CRAFTING KIT

Your kit should consist of:

- Scissors
- A hot glue gun and glue sticks
- Craft glue
- Tape
- Markers
- Paint and brushes

Scissors: You will want two pairs of scissors, a big pair for adult hands and a small pair for little hands. I have been happy with Fiskars brand. They make Fiskars For Kids which have blunt points and only cost a couple of dollars.

Glue: So-called “school” glue like Elmers is not strong enough for serious crafting; get a sturdier brand of white glue like SoBo. You will also need a hot-glue gun and plenty of glue sticks. Using a hot-glue gun is a job for teens or adults; even so, you should get the kind that says “low temperature.”

There will be times when we will be using other kinds of glue but these two are the basics.

Tape: For convenience’ sake, I will refer to household sticky tape as “scotch” tape so we all know what we are talking about. Of course you may use whatever brand you prefer. Again, there will be times when we will be using other kinds of tape such as masking tape or electrical tape, but you should have “scotch” tape as part of your kit.

Markers: I use Sharpie markers a lot. They are permanent, though, so watch it, especially with younger children who may get them on clothes and furniture. Get at least one fine-point and one extra-fine. They come in a lot of colors but for most projects you will only need black. You will also want washable markers for other projects, and for younger children.

Paints and brushes: At the outset, I will provide paint, but you will want to acquire your own. I am particularly fond of acrylic paint for crafting. It is inexpensive (less than a dollar per bottle), non-toxic, fast-drying, and it is usually opaque with one coat. Before it dries it can be cleaned up with water but once it gets onto your clothes it is probably there for the life of the garment, so wear an appropriate cover-up.

Poster paints or temperas are good too if that's what you have on hand.

Don't spend a lot of money on brushes. Crayola brand brushes come in an assortment of sizes and they are fine for this kind of crafting.

These are some of the things we might be making. Please understand that this is NOT a curriculum – more like a list of possibilities.

Prints and printmaking

Potatoes and other vegetables
Styrofoam
Craft foam
Etc.

Beach crafts

Beach ornaments
Beach in a jar
Rock and shell mobiles
Water toys
Flying jellyfish
Etc.

Rocks

Painted rocks
Rock animals
Rock potato heads
Mancala game

Pets and puppets

Sock puppets
Egg carton puppets
Finger puppets
Bubble wrap aquarium
Cereal box aquarium
Owls

Hearts and flowers

Heart strings
Plastic lid flowers
Water bottle flowers
Etc.

Think spring!

Coffee filter butterflies
Butterfly/dragonfly magnets
Spring planter pets
Plant hanger for cuttings
Eggheads
Miniature greenhouse

Masks and monsters

Decorating masks
Space aliens
Spiders
Etc.

No business like snow business

Coffee filter snowflakes
Snowman door hanger
Snowman face

Let's make presents

M&M filled ornaments
Bath bombs
Teacher gift notebooks
Desk organizer
Etc.