

Mosaic Art Lesson Plan Outline

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Target age group

High school to adult

Supplies

*A 23" Circular or Square Board. You will need one for each student. I use particleboard designed for tabletops that are approximately 1/2" thick. The thickness helps protect against warping.

*One Tube of Construction-Grade Adhesive such as Liquid Nails®

*Glass and/or Tile Nippers. These are optional depending on the intricacy of the designs. Glass nippers have wheel cutting edges, while tile nippers have flat edges.

*Plastic Putty Knives

*Disposable Plastic Gloves and Heavier Leather or Canvas Gloves. These help to avoid cuts while working with and sorting glass.

*Sponges

*Grout

*Caulking Gun

*Disposable Cups

*Ceramic Tile, Stained Glass, and/or other Mosaic Material

*12" Glass Mirror for Center. Beveled edges are optional but give the best appearance.

Duration of Project

Nine to ten weeks, based on fifty-minute class times with preparation and cleanup. Additional time is required if any handmade tiles are used.

Objectives

1. Create a unique mosaic using the elements of shape, color, space, and the principles of rhythm, unity, variety, and movement.
2. Use excellent craftsmanship.
3. Create rhythm through the use of colors and shapes.
4. Create movement by utilizing an opus of tile patterns.

Procedure

Design

Discuss the elements and principles of design. Use photographs, slides, and examples of mosaics and other artwork to demonstrate the elements and principles of design. Discuss the principles of balance, rhythm, unity, variety, proportion, emphasis, harmony, and movement.

Have students create three idea sketches for their mosaics based on a cultural or historical theme (Roman, Greek, Native American, Asian, Egyptian, or other styles of art), a theme based in natural or man-made design (landscape, animal, sports, etc.), or a nonobjective abstract design utilizing repetitive patterns (stars, lines, geometric, or biomorphic shapes).

Sketch the design template on the backboard. Enlarge it to fit the background. Some students may be able to do this freehand, while others may need to use an opaque projector or grid drawing. Special-needs students may need stamps and ink.

Tiles and glass should be sorted according to color to make final assembly a smoother process.

Assembly

Demonstrate tile and glass nipping inside a plastic bag with disposable gloves for safety and to keep the tiles and glass localized.

Place the tiles on the design. Spread the adhesive on the tiles using toothpicks after the tiles have been matched to the design. It usually works best to work from the outside edge toward the middle (where the mirror is located if you are using one). Keep in mind throughout the process of placement and gluing the opus of the tile.

After the tiles have been glued and allowed to dry, select a grout color and mix the grout in plastic cups with water until a thick, milkshake-like consistency has been achieved. Apply grout with a putty knife and allow to dry twenty minutes. Use newspaper as a shield under the mosaic. Rinse the excess grout off with water. Avoid scraping the grout or scratches may result. After the mosaic is successfully cleaned, a grout sealer may be used to make the entire project permanent.