



ARTS-AT-HOME IDEAS FOR PARENTS

1. **SURFACE-RUBBING EXPLORATION** – Try having a surface-rubbing scavenger hunt to see what interesting **textures** exist in your own home. Place a **white or colored piece of paper** over a household surface, rub firmly with a **crayon or pencil**, and watch the texture design appear! Notice how different the designs look when you use a light colored crayon on a dark piece of paper.
2. **PLAY HOUSE** – from an architect’s point of view! After you try a surface-rubbing exploration with your child, get out some paper and a ruler (anything with a straight edge will do – even a book), and draw a floor plan of your house or apartment including all the furniture. Graph paper works well if you have some on hand. Be sure to include the locations of all your surface rubbing spots – you can even add in a texture sample!
 - Imagine what your house or apartment would look like if someone else – or something else—lived there. Redesign your home for your favorite character in a book or movie -- a monster, a dog, or even the seven dwarfs!
 - Design a new rug for a room that needs one. What colors, shapes, and sizes will you choose to use?
 - What's your favorite chair? Make a drawing of it. Make 10 more drawings to transform the chair for imaginary locations. How would you change the chair if it was in a castle? In a baby’s nursery? In a sports hall of fame? In a log cabin?
3. **DRAW YOUR DREAM TRIP.** Play pretend. (“Pretend we can go anywhere at any time...not to outer space, stay on planet Earth!”) **Draw your ideas** - don't use any words to tell about where you are going. Use **color** to tell about the season you are traveling in. Show what you'd see on your trip. When you are done with your drawings, tell each other about what you drew.
4. **DREAM BOX** -- Convert a **used shoe box** by pasting **images from magazines** on the outside, and start saving pennies you find in the street for your dream trip. Put your pennies and your dream trip drawings in the box for safe keeping. Plan other ways of saving money for a dream trip.
5. **FOUND-OBJECT STAMP SETS** – Try dipping **small, household objects** (blocks, Lego’s, buttons, thread spools, etc.) in an inkpad or a shallow tray of child-safe paint to create a found-object stamp. Print the stamp on a piece of paper to see what kind of image is created.
 - Repeat the stamps to make designs and patterns on big sheets of paper to create your own home-made wrapping paper.
 - Together with your child, put together the best items to build a found-object stamp set that can be saved in a box for future projects.
6. **THANK-YOU CARDS** – When your child receives birthday gifts, try making your own thank-you cards instead of buying them.
 - Use a simple alphabet stamp set and your found-object stamp set to make designs, pictures, and messages on your card.
 - Use child-proof paint instead of an ink-pad to brighten up colors. This is a practical way to get creative and a fun way to mark something off the “to-do” list.

- “Seal” the envelope of your card by putting one special stamp on the back. You can use a thumbprint as a seal to show the hand of the artist. Try putting two thumbprints together to make a heart shape!
7. **COLLECT ART MATERIALS** -- Recycle envelopes, cut pictures out of **magazines and junk mail**, and save **used wrapping paper** to build a low-cost collection of creative papers for collages or cards. Child-safe found objects for stampings and rubbings are often things you have in your home already – such as **kitchen utensils, sewing supplies, or desk items**. You just don’t have them collected in a place that’s easily accessible to small children!
 8. **GET ORGANIZED** – A cabinet or shelf that is low to the ground and easy for kids to reach is a good place to begin storing child-safe art supplies. It’s great to start a collection of paper scraps and images, which can be kept in a “**paper drawer**” that can be added to over time. Found objects can be kept in a **shoebox or a Tupperware container** that your child can access and add to on his or her own.

TIPS:

- When working with your youngsters on projects, be flexible. Be open to trying something in a different way. For example: If there is no stamp pad or finger paint available, try using food coloring in a little water.
- Remember: this should be fun for you, too. Similar to cooking, there are many 'right ways' to proceed with these projects.
- Combine processes: use the texture rubbings in a collage. Suggest to or model for your young person cutting the rubbings into interesting shapes or something they might find on a special trip.
- If your child loses interest, put the project aside for another time. But do ask them to please help you when it's time to clean up!

###

Contact: Susan Johnson (CAE) 212-971-3300 x 308

About The Center for Arts Education

The Center for Arts Education (CAE) is committed to stimulating and sustaining quality arts education as an essential part of every child’s education in the New York City public schools. CAE provides tools and resources to deliver quality arts learning for all children. Our innovative teaching and learning programs – fostering collaboration with teachers and school leaders, cultural and community organizations – help build arts-infused school communities. Our advocacy initiatives educate policymakers and the public about the value of arts education and a fundamental part of children’s overall health and well-being. Visit www.caenyc.org to learn more about The Center for Arts Education.