

Kindness Coins

Share a little art,
spread a little kindness

One of the most powerful motivations for making art is to be able to share it with others. Art can be a response to things that are happening in the moment, including an experience or observation. Many works of art are conceptualized with plans for how it will be passed on to others. A piece of music, for example, is rarely ever created for the composer only. It is created so that it can be listened to by others as much as possible. Making artwork for the purpose of giving it away is not only a charitable action — it also fosters generosity.

In 2019, artist Jonathan Saiz displayed a work entitled "#WhatIsUtopia," comprised of 10,000 individual 2" x 2" pieces of art. Once the exhibition closed, he gave away every piece. In a perfect world, he imagines that art and culture would be free and available to everyone.

"I don't know if free art can create a better world," Saiz said, "but I'm inspired to try...one tiny painting at a time."

Shareable artworks can be small, two-sided, and circular to make them easy to pass on and carry in a pocket or bag. These "Kindness Coins" can be made by anyone, regardless of age or skill level and can be made with many different materials. Air dry clay forms a hard, durable base. The surfaces can then be decorated with paintings, drawings, craft supplies, stamps or collage.



Multiple "coins" can be produced as a group or make-and-take activity, or as an ongoing project to keep

"early finishers" occupied.

Kindness Coins can be passed out as a way to say "thank you" or "good job". They can be a random gift of kindness left for someone to discover or a way to offer encouragement. One small artwork can make a world of difference.

GRADES K-12 Note: Instructions and materials are based upon a class size of 24 students. Adjust as needed.

Materials (required)

Sculpey Air Dry Clay, White 2.2 lb pkg (33659-1022); share one package across class
Blick Sulphite Drawing Paper, 80 lb, 100 sheets, 9" x 12" (10209-1043); need one sheet per student
Blick Economy Baren, 3-3/4" (42910-1004); share one between two students
Chartpak Pickett Tempate #1204i Circle Master, (55476-0100); share one between two students
Westcott Student Scissors with Microban Protection, Plastic handles, 7" (57607-2007); need one per student
Boxwood Clay Tools, Class set of 38, 6" (30304-1009); share one across class

Optional Materials for Decorating

Bic Mark-It Color Collection Permanent Markers, Set of 12 fine tip (22165-1012)
Sargent Art Liquid Metals Markers, set of 6, medium point (22304-1006)
Richeson Collegiate Semi-Moist Metallic Watercolor, Set of 12 (01679-1129)
Amsterdam Standard Series Acrylics, Metallic, Set of 6, 20 ml tubes (00643-0609)
Craft Medley Gemstones, assorted colors, 1 oz (81698-1001)
We R Memory Keeper Gem Stickers, Light, set of 45 (83724-1002)

Hygloss Bucket O' Sequins and Spangles, 4 oz (80961-1004)

Plaid Mod Podge, 8 oz Gloss Finish (02916-1108) or Sparkle Finish (02916-1005)



Ready to order materials?

Go to www.DickBlick.com/lesson-plans/kindness-coins to access a product bundle for your convenience.

Preparation

1. Break air-dry clay into smaller pieces and place in zip close baggies to keep fresh and distribute across class. Each student will need approximately 1 to 2 oz of clay.
2. Cover work surface with a sheet of drawing paper to protect it and to keep clay from sticking.

Process

1. Form a clay ball by rolling between hands. Depending on desired coin size, ball could be anywhere between a 1/4" and 1" in diameter. Flatten by pressing down against the table surface using the flat bottom of a cup or a hand baren. Do not roll, as this will stretch out the clay into an oval shape.
2. To create a perfectly circular shape, use a circle template sheet. Lay the sheet over the flattened clay so the desired coin-size opening is centered and there are no gaps between the clay piece and the edge of the circle. Press down firmly with fingers around the diameter of the circle flattening the clay beneath and creating a circular edge. Remove template and use scissors to neatly trim away the excess clay outside the circle.
3. While clay is still wet, small items such as gems, charms, or beads can be pressed into the surface. Clay stamps can be used and metallic powders and glitter can be patted onto it. As the moisture evaporates, the clay will shrink slightly and hold the items in place. Words and designs can also be carved into the wet clay using small, pointed tools. Small pieces of extra clay can be used to add raised areas and dimension.

If this is to be done as a make and take or group activity, the clay circles can be allowed to dry first, and decorated by gluing items onto the surface as the group gathers to create..

4. Once dry, the coins will be strong and very hard. To make them valuable, collectable and prize-worthy - turn them into small works of art! Words can be added using fine tip markers, pens and pencils. Add sparkle and shine with glitter glue, metallic ink, stick-on gemstone shapes and rhinestones. The clay surface accepts watercolor, acrylic paint, and also small ink stamps.
5. If desired, coins can be sealed with Mod Podge after they are decorated to increase shine and keep items more permanently attached.
6. Kindness Coins are meant to be given away, passed on and shared. They can be a meaningful way to express appreciation and gratitude, or recognize someone for politeness, caring and generous behavior. They can help lift spirits and encourage positivity. Start a movement - share kindness!

National Core Arts Standards - Visual Arts

Creating

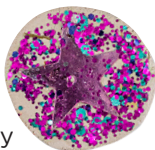
Anchor Standard 1: Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work.

Anchor Standard 2: Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Connecting

Anchor Standard 10: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Anchor Standard 11: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to deepen understanding.



Step 1: Divide clay and roll between hands into a ball shape. Flatten and use circle template to make a uniform circle shape.



Step 2: While clay is wet, press gems and glitter into the surface. Stamp and carve letters and designs with clay tools.



Step 3: Once dry, add glitter glue and attach small beads and buttons. The clay surface will accept acrylic color, watercolor, markers, colored pencils, ink stamps and more.

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