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FESTIVALS



The
Nicholas
Endowment

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Celebrating

**Mexican
Heritage**



mexican paper flowers

description

For this project we will be learning to make a Mexican tissue paper flower.

materials

Tissue paper	*Yarn	Scissors
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*Alternatives- pipe cleaners, floral wire



history

Trade of goods between Asia and Mexico was high during the colonial era of the Spanish conquest of Mexico. Many Mexican folk art traditions owe their origins to China. The national folk dress of Mexico is the splendid *China Poblana*. The Spanish name for tissue paper is *papel de China*. *Papel de China* is used in the making of piñatas, *papel picado* (cut paper art) and, of course, paper flowers. In colonial times paper flowers were a popular and inexpensive way to decorate homes and church altars. The original paper flowers were delicate in design, size and color. As time went by the artisans made the flowers larger, more creative, and more colorful; and established them as a traditional Mexican folk art.

tips

- If you want to make a smaller flower, try 3 sheets of tissue. For larger flowers, 7 sheets of tissues.
- Don't stick to one color for every flower, mix colors and shades.
- Cutting the edges in a half circle can be difficult for younger children, try cutting the ends into a triangle.



1. Stack 5 sheets of tissue paper and cut them into 4-inch squares.



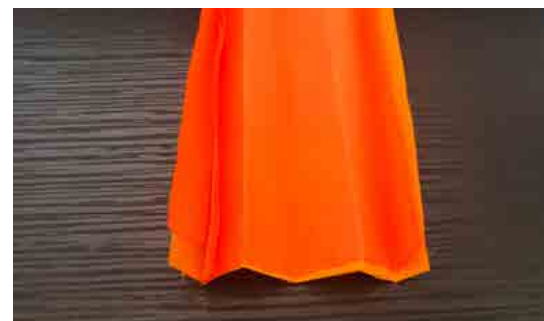
2. Collect your squares and pile them up neatly.



3. Fold the pile of tissues with an accordion fold of approximately 1/2 inch for each fold.



4. Flip and fold until you reach the opposite edge.



5. Cut a length of yarn, about 4 inches, and tie across the middle of the folded sheets.

Note: Tie it comfortably around the tissue, do not bunch it up.



6. Use scissors to trim the ends into a half circle.

Note: Don't cut too much off the ends, this will make your flower even smaller.



7. Starting on one side, separate each sheet, lifting it toward the center.

Note: Be gentle, otherwise the tissue will tear.



8. Repeat on the other side- gently separating each sheet and pulling it toward the center.



9. Fluff the flower to give it a rounder shape and you are done!

additional projects:

Make more flowers in different sizes and colors. Use them to make a flower garland, bouquet, or flower headband.

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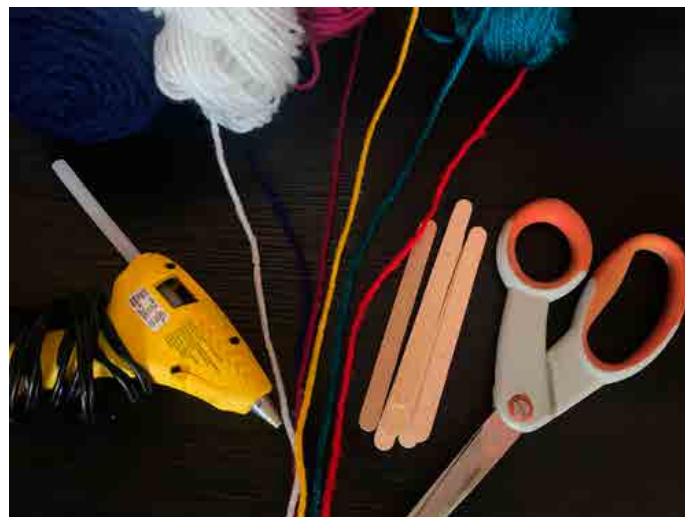
mexican god's eye

description

For this project we will be learning to make a Mexican God's Eye.

materials

Popsicle sticks	Yarn
Hot glue gun or liquid glue	Scissors



history

The God's Eye form is found throughout Native America, North and South, but is attributed to the Huichol Indians of Nayarit, Mexico, who are famously known for their art with yarn and beads. The God's Eye can be used ceremonially or as an ornament of adornment. For the Huichol, a God's Eye is used to ask a god for a special favor or blessing.

Traditions:

When a Huichol wants a special favor, a shaman, or holy man, is asked to construct a God's Eye to represent a certain god of the tribe's pantheon. As the shaman weaves, the requestor sits next to the shaman and joins in prayer. The person asking for the blessing asks for the Eye of God to find them and to rest on them. When completed, the ojo is placed in a sacred spot.

A Huichol father might weave a God's Eye which is placed over his child's bed, therefore signifying a request has been made to God to look over the child and protecting him/her. The father adds another layer of colored yarn each year to continue the protection of his child.

tips

- Number the sticks to keep track of your weaving.
- Keep all knots on the back of the God's Eye to keep the front neat.
- Do overlap the yarn, always lay it side-by-side. Cover the sticks, not the yarn.



1. Prepare the God's Eye: Glue two sticks together to form a plus sign.

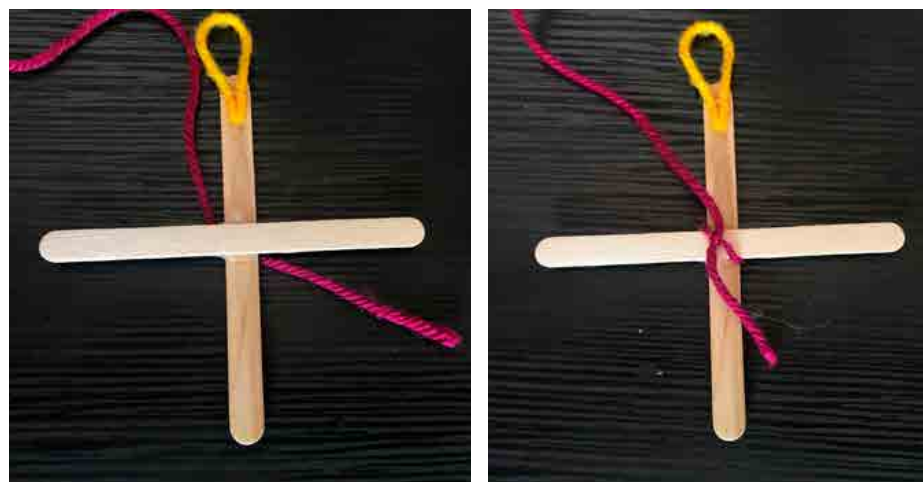
a. If you want to be able to hang the God's Eye, cut a bit of yarn, about 2 inches long, and glue it at one end of the God's Eye to form a loop.



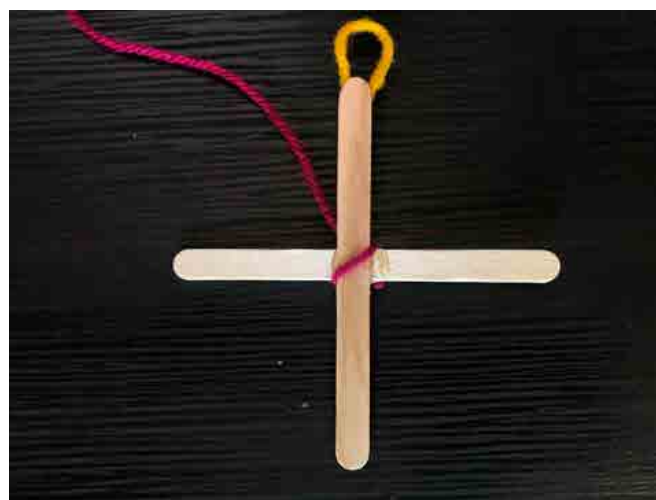
2. Choose your yarn color. This is a small God's Eye so use no more than three colors.



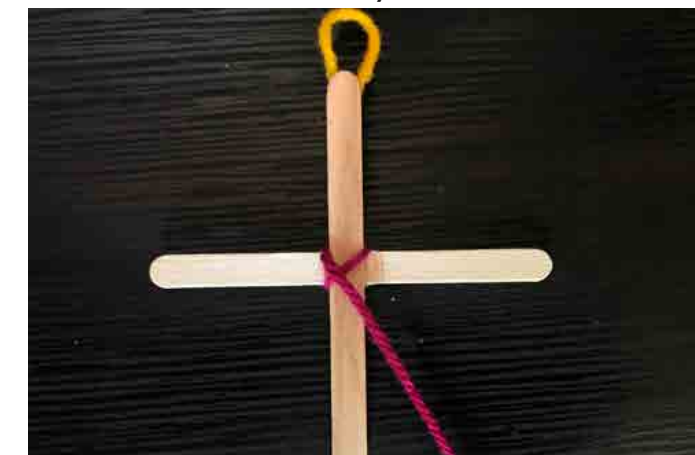
3. Tie the first color across the middle of the God's Eye. Make a knot on the side where the yarn loop is tied (this will be the back of the God's Eye).



4. Turn over to the front side.



5. Bring the yarn forward from the bottom and make an x-shape in the middle of the God's Eye.



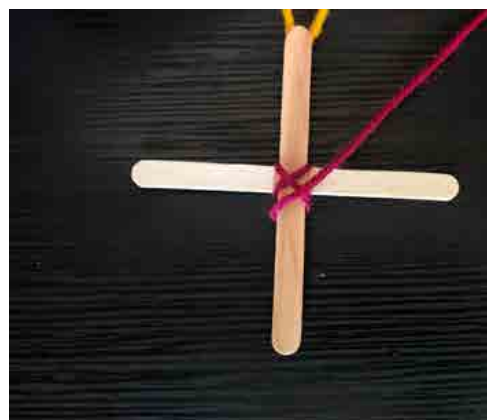
6. Wrap the yarn around the stick- wrap behind it and bring it up to the front and move on to the next stick.

a. Keep in mind: only wrap each stick once, and always keep the yarn on top when moving from stick to stick. Take care not to skip a stick while weaving.



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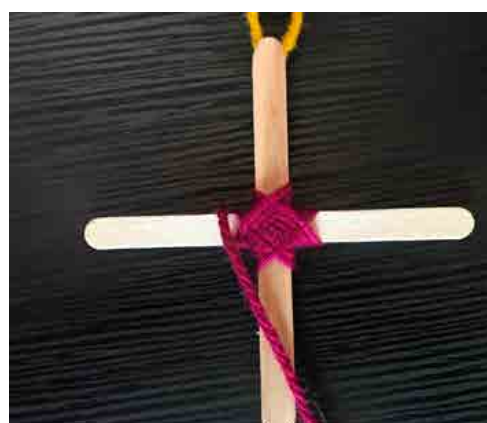
7. As you move to the next stick, turn the entire God's Eye in a clockwise motion. The yarn is going in a counterclockwise motion while you turn the God's Eye in a clockwise motion. This keeps the yarn from getting tangled around the God's Eye.



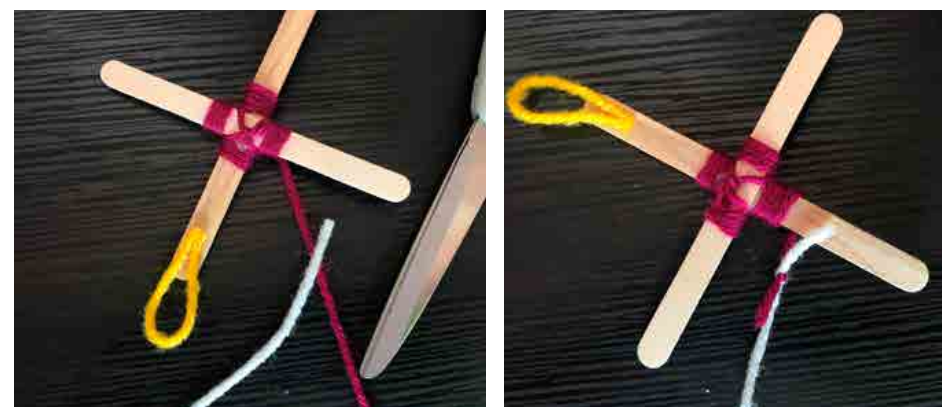
What is Happening:

The God's Eye is being formed, which looks like a diamond. Each turn of the yarn creates a side of the diamond. If you turn it over, you will see wrapped sticks but no diamond shape. It is easy to get lost and flip the God's Eye, so always keep the diamond shape in sight.

8. Continue wrapping-behind the stick, on front to the next one. Do as many revolutions with the first color as you like before switching colors.



9. Changing colors: You can change colors at any time. Tie the new color to the old color and continue weaving (wrap around the stick, on front to the next).



10. Continue weaving until the sticks are covered.



11. Finishing: Tie a knot around the last stick to finish the God's Eye or use hot glue to keep the yarn in place.



additional projects:

- Add beads, tassels or feathers to your God's Eye.
- Try making a larger God's Eye using coffee stirrer sticks.
- Make a round God's Eye using 4 sticks.

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make your own tortillas

ages

All Ages (with help from parents)

skill level

Beginner / Intermediate

materials

3 Cups of Unbleached Flour, plus extra for adding to mixture if it becomes sticky and to apply to rolling surface/rolling pin		
1 Teaspoon of Baking Powder	1 Teaspoon of Salt	1/3 Cup Vegetable or Olive oil
1 cup of Hot Water (not boiling but hot)	2 Kitchen Towels	Large Bowl
Rolling Pin	Flat Skillet or Pan	Spatula

history

The name “tortillas” came from the Spaniards when they arrived in Mexico in the sixteenth Century. Traditionally, tortillas were made of maize (corn) and prepared from nixtamalized maize. Nixtamalization is a process of preparation of maize where the corn is soaked and cooked in lime water and washed to remove the skins of the kernel. This process makes it easy to grind the maize into masa (dough). This traditional method is still used to make corn tortillas today. The flour tortilla is traditionally from the wheat growing regions in the northern part of Mexico.

Ruth Barrios (mother of the Bowers Museum’s Director of Community Programs, Genevieve Barrios Southgate) was famous for her flour tortillas. Not only did her family enjoy them but she also raised thousands of dollars for her grandchildren’s soccer teams by selling them at the Orange International Street Fair. In 1982 she won a prize at the Bowers Museum’s “Tortilla Roll Off.” Her recipe was featured in a cookbook co-authored by her daughter-in-law, Vicki Barrios Schley. Her recipe is the one shared below.

We hope you enjoy making your own flour tortillas and perhaps starting your own family tradition. If your first attempts at rolling fail and they come out looking like a map of South America, don’t worry – they’ll still taste the same as a perfectly round one. And, don’t forget, practice makes perfect!

The Barrios Family Tortilla Recipe- yields 12 tortillas



making the dough

1. Start by gathering all dry ingredients (flour, salt and baking powder) into a large bowl and mix.
2. Add the oil to the hot water.
3. Slowly add oil and water mixture to the dry ingredients while working it into the dough.
4. Work and knead the dough until it is springy. To test the springiness, poke the dough gently - it should bounce back.
5. Divide the dough into balls of equal size. Mixture will yield approximately 12 balls of dough.
6. Lightly coat each dough ball with oil to prevent the dough from drying out.
7. Cover with damp towel and allow dough balls to rest for 30 minutes.



shaping and cooking the tortillas

1. Heat an ungreased griddle or heavy frying pan* to medium high heat. Be ready to continuously adjust the heat so that the tortillas do not burn.
2. Set up a clean surface to use for rolling the tortillas.
3. Set a small amount of flour by your rolling surface. You will need to flour the surface lightly as you roll each flattened ball of dough. You will also need to add flour to the surface if the dough sticks to the rolling pin.



4. Flip and turn the tortilla as you roll each ball thinly until it is around 8 inches across.
5. Place the tortilla on the griddle for about 30 to 40 seconds. Flip it over and remove once it is speckled with brown spots on both sides. Used a spatula to avoid burning fingers.



6. Place cooked tortillas inside dish towel to keep them warm and soft.



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