

Activity 7

Expressing Sustainability Concepts Through Arts and Crafts

Goals:

- Explore deeper meanings of sustainability
- Increase awareness of cultural connections to sustainability
- Develop and enhance skills in arts and crafts

Outcomes:

- Increased understanding of the sustainability principles
- Increased awareness of cultural aspects of sustainability
- Enhanced life skills related to crafts and art

Background:

Art and crafts as a method for social change: A principle building block of a successful social movement is the creation of a sense of community. Through the sharing of cultural expression in art, food, or music, an attractive movement culture is established – eliciting greater personal interest and, therefore, participation. A creative activity can be an effective motivator of social change and a stimulating alternative to common learning methods.

Suggested Time: Project dependent; 1-2 hours to a craft project spanning the semester

People:

- Leader
- Participants

Materials/Resources:

- Field Trip, Guest Speaker, Extra Resources:
 - Found objects to be used in art piece other art and crafts
 - www.instructables.com and www.craftster.org are both excellent resources for crafting inspiration. Instructables even has a “Green” section to learn about sustainable DIY (Do It Yourself) projects!

People:

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- Participants

Materials/Resources:

- Field Trip, Guest Speaker, Extra Resources:
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NOTES:

STEP 1

- Find a group of other sustainable craft enthusiasts around campus

STEP 2

- Discuss potential projects ideas of focusing on a theme or themes of sustainability.

Use media such as video, slide show, food recipe, mural, poster, jewellery, trip to clay works, joint patch quilt, baskets, making jam, performance art (see examples below).

STEP 3

- Find out more about project ideas and connections to sustainability through local resources.

Contact local artists for ideas and inspiration. Ask them if they would like to speak to the group! NSCAD is a great resource, befriend some artists!

STEP 4

- Gather material for project.

Ensure participants are purchasing eco-friendly materials and, preferably, from local sources.

STEP 5

- Create piece

STEP 6

- Once completed showcase your work in a common for all to see

Examples:

Joint patch quilt

Working together to accomplish a common goal brings people together. Get your group to make a patch quilt, by asking everyone to sew one square of the quilt together. Hang the quilt in a common area to remind everyone of the sense of community that was developed, or donate the quilt to a local charity. Re-use material from other sources.

Jewellery

Reusing materials is a great way of reducing waste. Recycled silverware can be used to make beautiful jewellery. Jennifer Hunter, a local artist makes a line of jewellery from old silverware. Check out <http://www.hunterstreetsilver.com/> for some great ideas.

Basket Weaving

Preserve the Mi'kmaq, Acadian, and African Canadian art of basketry by making your own baskets. Search online for basket making tools. Check out websites such as <http://www.basketweaving101.net/howto.htm> or <http://basketmakers.com/topics/tutorials/construction.htm>.

See if guest speakers are available from organizations such as the Basketry Guild of Nova Scotia or different cultural groups to hear how wood is carefully harvested, treated, split and woven.