

## Junk modelling

This is great for helping children understand shapes, textures and different materials. It will also help the child to exercise their creativity, inventiveness and problem solving.

### You will need:

Empty egg boxes, shoe-boxes, cereal boxes, cardboard rolls, anything not too big (it's likely to be part of your home for a while but if you have the space, by all means let your children create the next Titanic!).

It's easier to decorate cardboard than plastic, but there's no reason you can't have clean plastic bottles and yoghurt pots too.

Then some PVA glue, lots of rolls of sticky tape, old magazines, paints, foil, old bottle tops, dried pasta, scraps of materials... anything goes as long as it's safe.

### What to do:

The key here is to let the children take the initiative.

1. Clear a space so that nothing you want to keep is going to get incorporated into the design. Protect any delicate surfaces with old newspapers (you can stick the edges to the undersides of the table.)
2. Lay out all the materials and the means to stick them together.
3. Put aprons or old shirts on the children and tie their hair back if needs be.
4. Then sit back and be amazed by what they are creating. With junk modelling, there are no rules as long as it's safe.



## How can doodle art boost creativity and relieve anxiety in children?

### 3 big benefits of doodle art

- It helps improve memory and concentration

Doodling helps the brain to stay alert for a long period and, as a result, process more information than it would if a person wasn't doodling.

- It boosts creativity

Research has shown that doodling or art-making tasks can help our creativity

- It helps express emotions and relieves anxiety

Encouraging your child to doodle, can help to release these locked in emotions or anxieties. One of the amazing benefits of doodling is its ability keep you focused on the here and now.

### Tips to help encourage your child to doodle at home

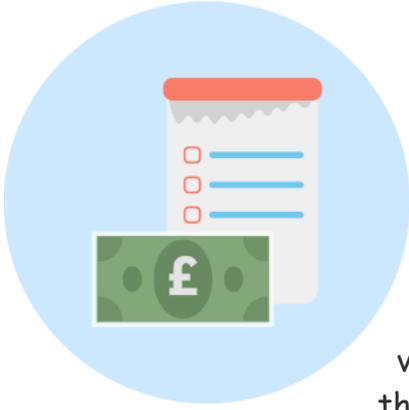
- Give your child some free mind time to let their thoughts wander. Don't impose your thoughts on them.
- Don't judge their drawings.
- After they have finished doodling, talk about their idea or the thought behind it.
- Encourage your child to doodle different faces in one after another.
- Before going to bed let your child draw their day or just a few patterns.
- Help your child to become aware of his or her senses. This will help them to express themselves well visually.
- One easy way to get started is to use shapes to create an artwork.
- Encourage your child to do both composition-based doodles and pattern-based doodles.

Doodle art will help your child to face the challenges of their day with ease, happiness and joy.

***Applaud the artistic efforts of all children. Saying "You worked on that painting for 20 minutes!" or "I bet you feel proud of what you created!" will help build self-confidence and creativity.***



## Shopping List



This maths exercise incorporates everyone's special interests, which is great if you have SEN children with very intense or specific hobbies. Ask each child to name their favourite item and then write these on a piece of paper - write the word and draw a small picture to represent it if you can.

Next, give every item on the shopping list a price (make this as easy or hard as is suitable) and hand out a pretend £10 note to your child. Ask your child - if they wanted to buy their favourite item with their note, how much change would they get? Ask them to shout it out, write it down or come and draw the figure on the board depending on their level of ability.

## Guess the Emotion



This activity will help students to improve their recognition of body language and facial expressions. Write a list of some common emotions - e.g. happy, sad, angry, afraid, bored, pleased - and then stand in front of the child and read out the name of the first emotion on the list. Pull a face and use your body language to show this emotion and ask the children to copy you.

Once you've been down the list, ask your child to recreate one of the actions you've just performed (or do this again yourself if the children are reluctant) and see whether the rest of the family can guess which emotion it is based on solely through body language and facial expressions. Go around the family and ask each person to act out an emotion in turn.