

The Tree Medallion Project

Phase 3 Extension Activity

Purpose

This activity encourages students to show their appreciation of nature through art.

Overview

Students will create a personalized medallion representing their ideas and individual reflections on the natural environment present in their schoolyard or community. They will begin by sketching nature-themed pictures on a paper template then transfer their pictures to a tree cookie using pencil crayons. Finishing touches include the addition of lacquer to seal the wood, and hemp twine so the medallion can be worn around the neck.

Getting Organized

Level: Grade 6

Curriculum Connections:

Visual Arts – Creating and Presenting

Length: up to 45 minutes

Materials:

- Tree cookies and hemp twine*
- Tree medallion template (*attached*)
- Pencils, pencil crayons, scissors, paint brushes
- Mod Podge*® or similar lacquer

Teacher Background

In order to empower your class to make positive changes in their community and participate in solving environmental problems, it is important for students to develop their knowledge of, and appreciation for, the natural environment. They will soon recognize that urban areas are comprised of more than buildings and roads, and that nature exists all around them and takes on many forms.

One of the ways to encourage a connection to nature is to have students think about the features of their local, natural environment that are important to them. This can be as simple as a rock they climb on or a tree they walk past, to more complex spaces like parks and ravines. Students will use one side of the tree cookie to reflect these ideas. Some students may have trouble deciding what to draw, or may doubt their artistic abilities, so a brief discussion of what can be found in their local community may be beneficial.

Activity

1. Photocopy the template so there is one page for every three students. Cut each page into thirds.
2. Provide students with a brief introduction to the art activity, explaining that the completed tree medallion will have their name on one side and a picture on the opposite side that represents something significant or important to them from the natural community, found in their schoolyard or neighborhood.
3. Distribute one template strip to each student. Encourage them to brainstorm ideas and create their practice sketch. Students should keep the detail fairly simple; the addition of colour will make all the difference.

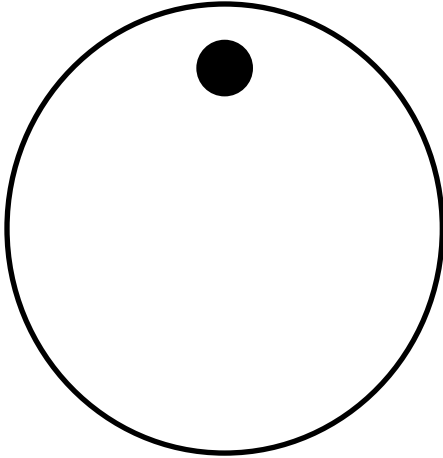
4. Once the rough sketches are complete, distribute one tree cookie to each student and instruct them to begin drawing their sketches lightly with pencil. **IMPORTANT!** Remind students to make sure the pre-drilled hole on the tree cookie is up! Students can go over their pencil lines with sharp pencil crayons, pressing firmly so the colours are bold. Avoid the use of markers, as they will run in the rain and snow.
5. Provide each student with a piece of hemp twine, long enough that when fed through the hole in the tree cookie and tied, the medallion can be worn around the neck.
6. Next, the students will apply lacquer (Mod Podge® or similar product) to both sides of the tree cookie using a paint brush. The lacquer will appear white and streaky at first but will dry to a clear, hard finish. Hang the medallions to dry.
7. Instruct students to tidy up. Be sure to wash the paint brushes in warm soapy water before the lacquer hardens on the bristles.
8. Once the medallions are dry, you can ask each student to make a brief presentation about they drew and why. Encourage the students to wear their tree medallions with pride!



***Note to teachers:**

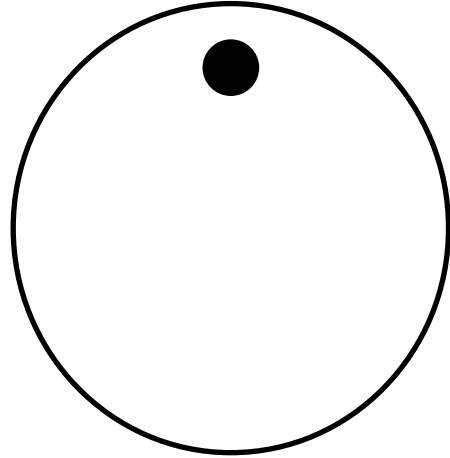
Please contact staff at the outdoor centre to inquire about the availability of pre-drilled tree cookies and hemp twine.

SKETCH



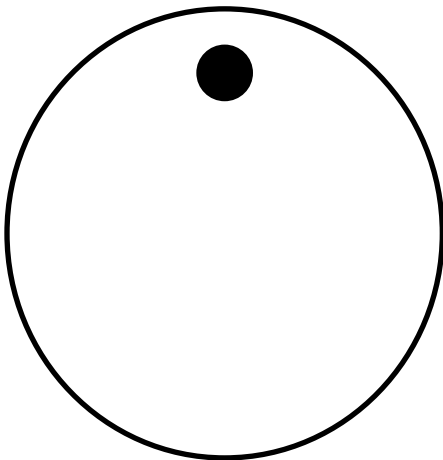
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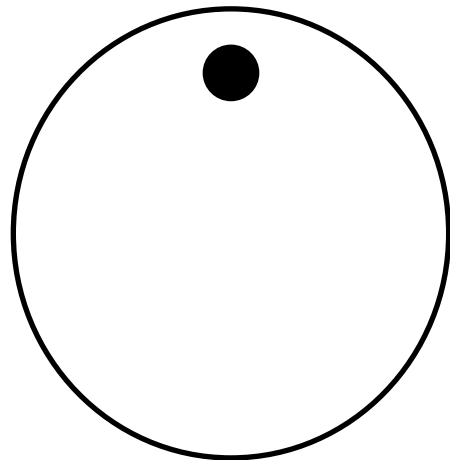
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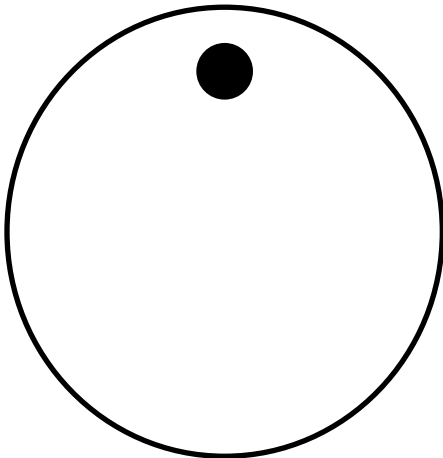
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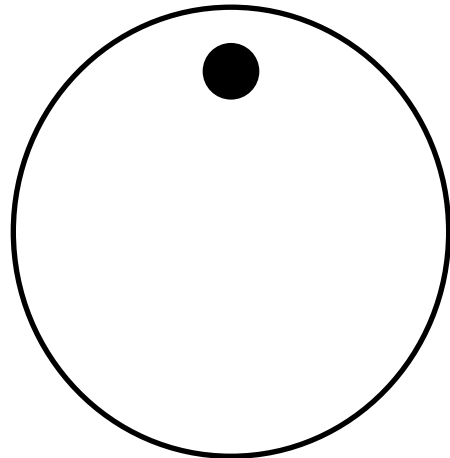
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