

paint love

Paper + Pencil Art Projects!

Paper and anything you can write or draw with can be powerful tools to create and express yourself.

1. **Shield of Strength**

Draw a shield and design it with what makes you feel brave.

2. **Lifesize Superhero**

Use a long sheet of butcher paper, printer paper, or carefully torn open paper grocery bags, (cut off the handles or any piece that doesn't lay flat and make sure you tape on the printed side and then turn it over to draw on), tape the pieces together until you have a flat piece of paper big enough for you to lay down on. Have someone trace the outline of your body in a pose that makes you feel powerful and strong. Draw details, cut out the shape, and turn yourself into a superhero! Brainstorm what powers your superhero has, and write a story about how your character saves the day on the back or side of your character. Or, if you'd rather write than draw, use a thick marker to write out empowering phrases to fill the shape of your superhero. *Think about: When do you feel empowered and strong? What could you do to help yourself feel this way more often?*

3. **Heart Map**

Draw a big heart. Using words, patterns, and colors, draw or write what you keep in your heart: If you need some prompts, consider: joyful memories, worries, fears, important people, fun activities, etc.

4. **Inside Out Portrait**

Draw an outline of your head (or your best head- shape!). Draw a line down the middle. One side represents the inside of your mind and the other is the outside. Draw or write what fills each side. You could also collage parts of your piece using magazines. *Think about how what each person keeps inside and outside might be different.*

5. **Past and Future Hands**

On a piece of paper, either side by side or on the front and back, trace your left hand and right hand (might be tricky with the hand you don't usually write with, you can get someone to help you trace that hand if need be!). Design the left hand to represent your past (people, places, words, symbols, etc.) The right hand represents the future. *Think about: what ways you've grown and changed and what you want to bring into the future and what you want to leave behind.*

6. **Gratitude Squiggle Challenge**

Draw a big, continuous squiggle on a piece of paper, in each section, list or draw as many things as you can think of that you're thankful for. They can be big things or small things, but be as specific as possible. See if you can fill the entire page. *Also try the squiggle challenge drawing a different pattern in each section.*

7. **Thankfulness Paper Chain**

Using scrap paper (even paper like junk mail that has words on it is okay!) cut pages into thick strips of all about the same size. Write things you're thankful for, or little happy moments, on each one. Linking it through the previous piece, tape, glue, or staple each piece into a circle, making it into a paper chain. You can even ask other people to add on to your chain. See how long you can make it!

8. **Tear-Collage Mosaic**

Using junk mail, magazines, or other scrap paper, tear out pieces by color and then glue them down into a design to create a collage. Try creating your name, a picture, or a word that is important to you, or tear/cut the pieces into squares and create a pattern on a square page. Try creating multiple squares to make a recycled paper quilt!



9. Puzzle Person

Draw an outline of the shape of a person (like a wide gingerbread cookie). Fill the body with connected puzzle piece shapes, they can be big or small. Think about all the different feelings you feel. Try to name as many as you can- you can even write a list. Then, think about where in your body each of those emotions emerges. For example, when you're nervous, do you feel it in your stomach or your heart? When you're happy, do you feel it in your jumpy legs? Now try to think about if each of these feelings has a color. Fill in each puzzle piece with a color, words, or even just a pattern or scribble that represents a feeling that shows up in that part of your body sometimes.

10. Cardboard Community

Using recycled cardboard (and other scrap paper, junk mail, receipts, used envelopes, etc.), scissors, and glue or tape, cut out lots of different shapes reato create different types of buildings, homes, and other things in your ideal community. (parks, trees, swingset, bike path, shops and stores, library, school, post office, ice cream shop, anything you think has a place in a peaceful community!) Glue them down on a larger piece of cardboard to create a collage. Invite a family member to create with you and make an even bigger community! *Think about: what things define your peaceful community? What can you do in your real community (whether that's just your house right now, or at school, etc.) to make it more peaceful?*

Feeling stressed? Try these simple exercises to help calm your brain and body.

Extended Exhale Breathing

Count silently in your head as you inhale: 1, 2, 3, exhale: 1, 2, 3, 4.

Increase the counts as you're able (breathe in for 4, out

"Rectangle breath" is another version of this, either tracing the shape of a rectangle in the air, or with an actual piece of paper for a visual guide, slowly breathe in moving your finger slow the short side of the rectangle, and slowly breathing out as you trace the long side.

Why it helps: Breathing out longer than you breathe in engages your parasympathetic nervous system, which is in charge of calming and rest.

5 Senses Challenge

You can draw, write, or just silently name these things. When you're feeling overwhelmed, this exercise can help you connect your brain and body to where you are right now, rather than spiraling out into worry.

Five things you see right now

Four things you can *touch* right now

Three things you *hear* right now

Two things you can *smell* right now

One thing you can *taste* right now