



MOSAIC ART

A COMPLETELY CREATIVE
CHALLENGE FOCUSING ON
PRODUCING ART

AIM: To create
a mosaic style
art piece

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Lots of basic LEGO pieces
- Base plates (either 32x32 or 16x16)
- Brick Separators

SET UP:

1. Place the LEGO in the middle of the table or on a mat on the floor
2. Provide each student (or team) with 1 base plate and 1 Brick Separator.

Setting the Scene

To start this activity you can provide students with a theme or allow them to be fully creative and come up with their own idea.

A theme could be set around a topic of inquiry, a specific learning objective, colour usage, and more.

Types of mosaics are explained below.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

Option 1: Basic Single Layer Mosaic

This style of mosaic making really brings this art back to its basic form. An image is formed with just 1 layer of bricks or plates of the same size like the example image at the top of this activity sheet. Extending this activity you can allow a space for students to experiment with different layers to see how their art piece reacts to it.



NOTE: If you are already set up with the resources for doing the Mosaics with Maths activity, then they are perfect for this style of mosaic.

Option 2: Textured Mosaic

This style is all about utilising ALL the parts that construction bricks have to offer, and provides the students to create an image that has different levels and textures to it. Students can start the base picture with basic bricks or plates. Then once they have the design sorted, the idea is to layer all kinds of different parts to create texture which will enhance the look of the picture.



Option 3: Koru Mosaics

This might sound easy, but it is NOT! The thinking and trial and error required to create a curved shape from square pieces is hard for many students and teachers. This will take considerable testing of patience and skill. But this is why this activity is so amazing. Students will explore the ideas of curves while finding ways to express our national icon of the koru in a LEGO art form. Once mastered your students will create some of the most stunning koru art. You can choose to use just the traditional red, black and white colours. Or you can introduce other colours to allow a space for students to express and add their culture and ideas to the koru.





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RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Patterns** - children learn to create patterns of varying degrees of difficulty. Repetition of the same pattern can be calming for some children
- **Symmetry and reflections** - the introduction of these concepts enables children to reverse in their mind how the pattern would be reflected and then the action is replicated on the board. Elements of how symmetry works can be explored to illustrate this concept in a creative way.
- **Colour, shape, size recognition** - these mathematical aspects are important as the foundation for mosaic making. Understanding how different shapes and sizes work together and the coordinating of colours for the patterns to be enhanced are all part of these activities.
- **Collaboration** - working together on a board, pattern design and creating it, or sharing the LEGO pieces and discussing individual designs are all part of collaboration.
- **Design and art** - mosaic work is art. The colour combinations, patterns, and how the bricks are assembled all contribute to the design and execution of the mosaic.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana reo- Communication

Children have the ability to be creative and expressive through a variety of activities, such as visual arts, while developing skill and confidence with the art process and have the ability to explore, enjoy and describe patterns and relationships between shape and space.

➡ This links to children enjoying the process not the product of their art design through the creation of a mosaic pattern.

Mana aotūroa- Exploration

Children learn strategies for active exploration, thinking and reasoning. Progress in this area happens when children show an ability and inclination to cope with uncertainty, imagine alternatives, make decisions, choose materials and devise their own problems.

➡ This links to children understanding that trying things out, exploring, playing with ideas and materials and collaborating with others are important and valued ways of learning.

New Zealand Curriculum

Visual Arts

Students will explore a variety of materials and tools and discover selected principles.

➡ This links to the variation in pieces, including the principles of colour especially when the same shade is used, and the possibilities of construction e.g. vertical, horizontal.

Maths

Students will demonstrate their knowledge of shape recognition and reflections.

➡ This links to the use of symmetrical pieces being offered (2 of the same piece which can be used to mirror each other)



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SCULPTURES

A CHALLENGE THAT COULD
PRODUCE REAL OR ABSTRACT ART

AIM: To create
a sculpture

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Lots of basic LEGO pieces (like the 2x4 Brick)

SET UP:

1. Place the LEGO in the middle of the table or on a mat on the floor
2. Provide each student (or team) with 1 base plate and 1 Brick Separator.

Setting the Scene

For first-time users of this activity start the session by discussing what a sculpture means. Remember to bring in the words 'abstract' and 'realistic' and discuss and expand on these concepts if needed.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

This activity is an extension of the 'Back to Basics' challenge.

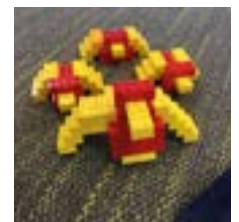
Students will use, where possible, the most basic bricks you have to create a sculpture of their choice.

The main difference between this challenge and just building with bricks is that you are not providing base plates for students to build onto and they must think quite specifically about trying to recreate a realistic object, or design their own abstract item.

Extension 1: Provide an object for the students to recreate out of the bricks provided. They could build a realistic size of the object, or they could make it HUGE or tiny. Scale can be set by you as their teacher, or allow them to discuss and choose this for themselves. If you would like to see students have more choice in this activity, provide several objects that they can select from. These could be small items such as a pencil, paperclip, or a drawing pin. To larger objects like a ball, chair, computer/laptop.



Extension 2: Expanding on extension 1, use real objects and get students to make an abstract version of the item provided. Get them to think about Picasso's art. Use creative colours. Make the object back to front or upside down. Maybe parts of the object are in the 'wrong' place.



Extension 3: Let's go completely abstract. With no object in mind get students to create a new shape. A new piece of LEGO art that does not exist already. Think of random shapes put together in exciting and different ways.





SCULPTURES

A CHALLENGE THAT COULD
PRODUCE REAL OR ABSTRACT ART

AIM: To create
a sculpture

RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Layering** - children learn to create a layered effect with building their sculptures. Building creatively using a range of shapes, sizes, and colours
- **Spatial Awareness** - in the first few activity options the children are using their spatial knowledge to replicate the item they are copying.
- **Enlargement/ Reduction** - creating a larger creation or down sizing the item to another size illustrates children's ability to spatially change an object.
- **Collaboration** - working together on a build, creating a sculpture, and sharing the LEGO pieces while discussing individual designs are all part of collaboration.
- **Design and art** - colour combinations, patterns, and how the bricks are assembled all contribute to the design and execution of the sculpture.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana reo- Communication

Children discover different ways to be creative and expressive.

➡ This links to children being creative and expressive through a variety of activities, such as visual art activities.

Mana aotūroa- Exploration

Children learn strategies for active exploration, thinking and reasoning. Progress in this area happens when children show an ability and inclination to cope with uncertainty, imagine alternatives, make decisions, choose materials and devise their own problems.

➡ This links to children's ability to represent discoveries using creative and expressive media.

➡ Children learn the process to understand that trying things out, exploring, playing with ideas and materials and collaborating with others are important and valued ways of learning.

➡ This links to children's ability and inclination to cope with uncertainty, imagine alternatives, make decisions, choose materials and devise their own problems.

New Zealand Curriculum

Visual Arts

Students will explore a variety of materials and tools and discover selected principles. (L2)

➡ This links to how the sculptures are created from both an item given or through their imaginative creations. The principles being composition of bricks, how the sculpture is formed, what layering and angles needed to be considered to create the shape.

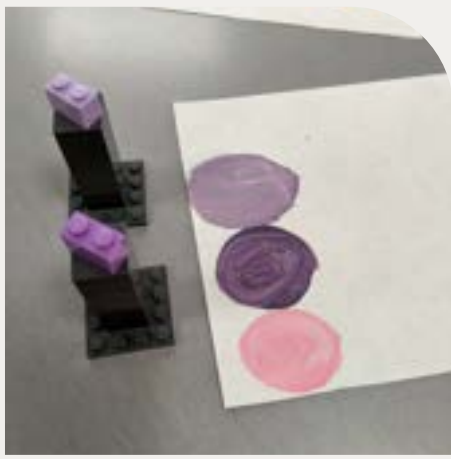
Students will be able to describe the ideas their own and others' objects and images communicate. (L3).

➡ This links to the interpretation of their sculpture and how they portray it in their own words. The description of the abstract sculpture creation will help those appreciating the complexity of the art.



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COLOUR MIXING

A COLOURFUL CHALLENGE
EXPLORING HOW COLOURS MIX

AIM: To accurately mix colours to match a LEGO brick

ITEMS NEEDED:

- Paper - preferably white
- Primary colour paints and black and white
- Paintbrushes and mixing plates
- Various coloured LEGO pieces preferably from one colour palette e.g. yellow-red; blue-green.

SET UP:

- Provide students with a range of coloured LEGO bricks to select from.
- Using the paints, mix colours together to match the LEGO colours.
- For beginner students talk briefly about how black and white can be used to change the hue/make the colour lighter or darker.

ALTERNATIVES & EXTENSIONS

NOTE 1: If you have older LEGO, the colours of your bricks are most likely all prime colours with only small changes. If this is the case purchase a small box of 'Classic' Bricks from your local LEGO store to set yourself up. Look on the sides of the box for a list of the parts and colours in the box.



NOTE 2: If you have the LEGO available make a stand for the chosen colour to sit on to really set it out from the resources already on the table. See our photos for an idea of what to build.

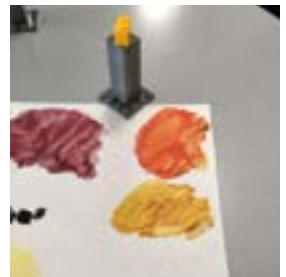
Variation 1: Once students have become confident in their ability to mix colours to match a shade of LEGO brick, change up what colour you put out there. For example, choose only shades of blue, or if it is autumn select only autumn colours.

Then extend this activity by getting them to mix those colours and produce an image using just those shades.

For example, if using autumn colours students could paint a leaf or tree. If using all blues, students could paint a lake or sky scene (or a lake with a sky background). OR students could use these shades to create their own self-portraits.

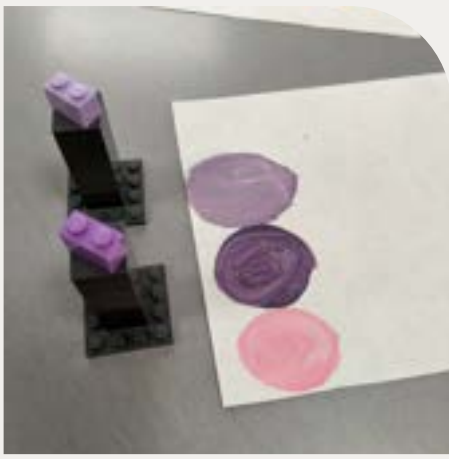
Variation 2: Moving away from LEGO, get students to create their own colour palette. Then head out into the classroom, into the playground, head to the local park, and find items that match to their palette. Get students to record their results.

Extending on variation 2. As students are exploring the environment to find colour matches to their palette, if they locate an item that has an interesting colour but does not match their palette, if possible bring this item back to the learning space and mix paint to match this new item.



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COLOUR MIXING

A COLOURFUL CHALLENGE
EXPLORING HOW COLOURS MIX

AIM: To accurately mix colours to match a LEGO brick

RICH EXPERIENCES

- **Hues and Saturation** - children learn the concept of colour mixing and creating a name for their colours as well. Understanding what makes a colour lighter and darker just by adding blue, or black or white creates a new understanding and appreciation for colours we see in our world.
- **Rich language** - introducing the art colour palette names to the colours the children are creating extends their vocabulary and helps develop their language knowledge. Using the correct names of magenta, crimson, cobalt blue, turquoise, lime creates a way for children to differentiate between colours with more accuracy. LEGO have their own names for each of the colours as well so children could investigate what these names are as well.
- **Maths quantities** - Part of colour mixing is working the quantities of each of the colours needed to make the match. Recording how much of each colour they use will help them replicate the same colour again next time.

LINKS TO CURRICULUM

Te Whāriki

Mana reo- Communication

Children discover different ways to be creative and expressive using a range of materials and modes.

- ➡ This links to children exploring different mediums alongside LEGO with a purpose of defining a colour palette.
- ➡ Children show skills with multiple media which can be used for expressing moods or feelings or representing information.

Mana aotūroa- Exploration

Children learn the ability to represent discoveries using creative and expressive media.

- ➡ This links to children trying out a different mediums of paint to be creative. The initial mixing of the paint also involves control of their fine motor skills as they don't need too much paint to create the colour, and the technique of mixing it requires little movements.

New Zealand Curriculum

Visual Arts

Students will be able to explore a variety of materials and tools and discover elements and selected principles. (L1&2)

- ➡ This links to using paint as a medium to explore the element of colour matching and learning about different hues and saturation of colour.

Students will be able to develop and revisit visual ideas, in response to a variety of motivations, observations, and imagination, supported by the study of artists' work. (L3)

- ➡ This links to the exploration of the environment and colour matching the colours the children have created. It is also about painting images or items of interest and exploring different painting techniques used by different artists and the different colour palettes they would commonly use.



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