

Activity Title: Baker's Clay Christmas Ornaments

Objectives:

- Fine/Gross Motor skills
- Teamwork and cooperation
- Stay on task/ Complete an activity



Materials (recipe for one pair):

- 4 cups flour
- 1 cup salt
- 1 ½ cups water
- Food coloring
- Measuring cups
- Plastic wrap
- Rolling pins
- Cookie sheets
- Plastic mixing bowls
- Shaped cookie cutters
- Protective table covering
- Smocks
- Ribbon

Methods:

Facilitator Preparation

1. Place protective table covering over table surface.
2. Divide baker's clay ingredients into bowls and set out measuring cups and food coloring.
3. Each pair should have a bowl and a spoon to mix the clay.
4. Before participants sit down, have them put on smocks. Assist those that need it.
5. Pair each child with an adult and have them sit down together at the table.
6. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.
7. When participants are done cutting shapes, collect the shapes and place on cookie sheet.
8. Bake the clay for 30 minutes to 1 hour, until no moisture is left.
9. Let cool and then pass out to participants for decoration.

Intergenerational Participants

1. Pass around the water bowl. Have each pair use the appropriate measuring cup and measure out 1 ½ cups of water. Pour into the mixing bowl.
2. Food coloring can be added at this point; only a couple drops are needed. Have pairs pick a color they would like and add it to the water in the mixing bowl.
3. Pass around the remaining ingredients. Pairs should work together to measure and pour the ingredients into the mixing bowl.
4. Have one participant hold the bowl while the other mixes the ingredients with their hands until combined. Have participants take turns kneading the dough for 8-10 minutes until smooth.



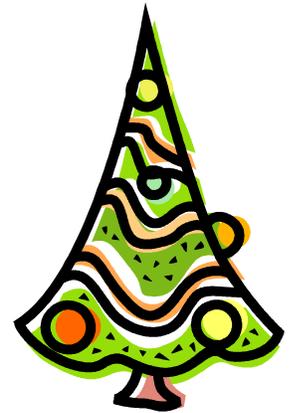
5. Once the clay is smooth, take out of the bowl and place on table.
6. Place a large piece of plastic wrap over the dough.
7. One partner uses the rolling pin to roll out the dough until it's smooth and flat.
8. Partners can take turns selecting cookie cutters and cut into desired shapes.
9. Use a straw to punch a hole in the top of the ornament before baking. This will be used to hang the ornament.
10. Wash your hands to remove dough and any color from the dough.
11. After the ornaments are cool, string a piece of ribbon through the hole and knot in a loop.

Special Considerations

- Kneading may be difficult for some. Make sure to assist those that are not strong enough to mix the dough well.
- Encourage teamwork and watch for participants that are bored or not participating.
- Some participants may need help measuring the ingredients; offer guidance if needed!
- Do not let participants near any hot materials.

Key Conversation/ Facilitation Questions

- How did the Christmas tree tradition start?
- What are some reasons we decorate Christmas trees with ornaments?
- What are your favorite winter holiday traditions?
- Do you have a favorite ornament?
- What are some of your favorite Christmas tree memories?



Extensions and Themed Activities

- Upward Extension
 - The ornaments can be decorated with acrylic paint once dry. This would be an excellent follow-up activity for the next session!
- Downward Extension
 - Have the dough pre-mixed so participants are only responsible for rolling out the dough, cutting shapes, and decorating.
- Related Activities
 - Baker's clay ornaments can also be made for other holidays (eg. Easter).
 - Create ornaments using craft materials and cardstock.
 - Design Christmas cards for relatives.
 - Build and decorate a gingerbread house.

