

Make an Aztec Inspired Mosaic Plate

Central Mexico was once home to the ethnic Aztec people who spoke a language called Nahuatl. They worshipped many gods and goddesses who were believed to control various life elements such as weather and agriculture. Mosaics, including masks, were common within Aztec art, often made of turquoise, coral and shells. To pay tribute to this ancient Mexican culture, your child can craft a colorful mosaic using old magazines, a paper plate and lots of imagination.

What You Need:

- Old magazines and catalogs
- Scissors
- Glue
- Paper plate or empty pie tin
- Aztec images for inspiration
- Pencil



What You Do:

1. Go to the library with your child or search the Internet together to find inspiration for this project. Have your child look at various sources: a good place to start is with the Aztec calendar and the gods and goddesses who are associated with it. Animals were frequently portrayed in Aztec art including frogs which symbolized good luck, butterflies which stood for transformation, and monkeys which represented celebration and dance. Snakes, jaguars, dogs and birds are said to have been highly popular, too.
2. Once your child has picked an image, ask her to draw it lightly in pencil onto the paper plate. It doesn't have to be an exact replica, simply your child's own interpretation of the picture.
3. Have your child thumb through old magazines and catalogs and find colors that she wants to use to decorate the plate.
4. Have her tear out the pages and then cut strips about $\frac{1}{4}$ " wide.
5. Cut those strips into squares, approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ " x $\frac{1}{4}$ ". These represent tiles that Aztec people would have used to create their mosaic works of art.
6. Working outward from the center, have your child glue the pieces onto the picture, leaving a little bit of space between each tile.
7. Cut out some triangles and smaller pieces to fill in edges and curves.
8. Have your child cover the entire plate with tiles and allow it to dry before putting it on display.

Now your child has a beautiful work of art commemorating Aztec culture, a perfect way to celebrate Hispanic Heritage!