

# Mayan Art

The Maya did a lot more than make circular calendars and predict the end of the world. They also had an alphabet based on a group of pictures that scientists today call glyphs. These glyphs formed one of the most complicated systems of writing anywhere in the world. Some of the images stand for words or ideas; others represent syllables. Together they not only form a writing system but an elaborate and beautiful expression of stone-carved art. With a handful of craft supplies, your fourth grader can capture some of that artistic magic for his own room.



## What You Need:

- Piece of heavy cardboard
- Pencil
- White glue
- Twine
- Scissors
- White paint
- Paintbrush

## What You Do:

1. To start, your child is going to need some inspiration. Don't just tell him about Mayan art -- show him! Help him research online or take a trip to the local library. (The glyph featured in the photo above is called Kimi.)
2. Have your young artist use a pencil to draw her glyph of choice on the piece of cardboard.
3. Which parts of your young artist's glyph will be thin raised lines? And which parts will be larger raised areas like the circles and the oval framing the Kimi glyph? When she has figured this out, she can lay down the thin lines. Do this by laying down a bead of glue along one of these areas.
4. Working carefully, she should use the twine to trace this line of glue. Help her cut the twine when she reaches the end of this line.
5. Glue and lay twine until all of the thin lines are done.
6. Now have her pick out the areas that she wants to look like raised blocks of stone. Put down a thin layer of glue. Using coils or single lines of twine, fill these areas.
7. Allow the glue to dry.
8. When the glue has dried, your young artist can paint her artwork white. Don't worry if the paint doesn't cover the cardboard and twine entirely evenly. Stone is often variegated in color.