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Collaborative Circle Painting



Materials

- Big sheets of paper or roll of paper
- Colored tempera paint in small cups, egg cartons, or on paper plates
- Black &/or white tempera paint
- Paintbrushes

Variation 1 / Guided

1. Set up 4 long sheets of paper. Give each participant 2 or 3 colors of paint and 2 or 3 brushes of different sizes. Participants move to a different paper (with their paints and brushes) for each “stop” in no particular order.
2. “Stop #1”
 - paint 3 filled in circles and 3 open circles
 - paint a shape in the middle of each open circle
3. “Stop #2” (artists move to a new table with their paints)
 - add 3+ more circles (open or filled)
 - paint a simple radial design inside of 3 circles
 - paint a design *around* 3 circles
4. “Stop #3” (artists move again)
 - add 3 more circles (open or filled)
 - paint a simple radial design in 3 circles and around 3 circles
 - continue to make designs anywhere!
4. “Stop #4” (artists move again)
 - hand out black (and/or white) paint and thinner brushes to each artist
 - layer details, lines & smaller designs on top of colors to create contrast

Variation 2 / Open Ended

Arrange paint and brushes around long paper(s). Paint a few example circles to start the design. Participants paint as they please, moving around the paper(s), adding in or layering circles and designs.

Debrief Prompts

- How did this feel?
- What was unexpected?
- How did you feel about not having a tool to make a perfect circle?
- Why do we use circles as the basis for this collaboration?

Tips

- Tape paper down so that it doesn't shift and move.
- Encourage participants to mix up their groups every time.
- Brainstorm a list of examples of types of lines, patterns, shapes, designs.
- Do not limit these paintings to one session. The more hands, layers, and contrast, the more beautiful they become. They are easier to add details to once they have a dry layer so keep the painting going and evolving with another group or at another time.



Iterations

- Try changing the type of background music for each “stop”.
- Try silent painting for one or some of the “stops”.
- Do a “gallery walk” half way through.
- Use different colored papers.
- Put the papers on the floor instead of a table



More Mandala Ideas + Starters

- Make a **nature mandala** with collected items such as shells, rocks, leaves, flowers, acorns, grass.
- Design a mandala with **recycled materials** such as straws, wrappers, bottle caps, lids, can tabs.
- Create a design with **items found around the house** like q-tips, cotton balls, silverware, buttons, pens, crayons, paper clips.
- Prompt a mandala drawing by suggesting a **starting shape** to put in the center (i.e. square, triangle, flower, star). Notice how everyone's designs start similar but evolve very differently.
- Prompt a mandala drawing by starting with a **spiral** in the center. Designs can continue growing the spiral or expand around the spiral.
- Write one's name in the center of a small circle. Create a sun-like mandala design by **writing words** or feelings like rays coming out from the name or word in the center. Feel free to draw designs with the words.

